United Nations S/PV.3688

Security Council

Fifty-first Year

Provisional

3688th Meeting
Thursday, 15 August 1996, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Eitel	(Germany)
Members:	Botswana	Mr. Nkgowe
	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Quin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Ladsous
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Lopes Cabral
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Wisnumurti
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Hume

Agenda

The situation in Croatia

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (S/1996/622)

Letter dated 2 August 1996 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/632)

Note by the Secretary-General (S/1996/648)

96-86098 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Expression of welcome to the Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to the United Nations

The President: I should like, at the outset of the meeting, to extend on behalf of the Council a warm welcome to the new Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Alfredo Lopes Cabral. We look forward to cooperating with him in the Council's work.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Croatia

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (S/1996/622)

Letter dated 2 August 1996 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/632)

Note by the Secretary-General (S/1996/648)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Croatia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the following documents: S/1996/622, report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium; S/1996/632, letter dated 2 August 1996 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council; and S/1996/648, note by the Secretary-General transmitting the text of the Agreement on Interim Co-financing of Public Services on the Territory Administered by UNTAES, by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, concluded on 8 August 1996 by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and UNTAES.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General of 5 August 1996 (S/1996/622) on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), and the letter from the Secretary-General of 2 August 1996 (S/1996/632) concerning the funding of the existing local administrative structures in the area of operations of UNTAES.

"The Security Council welcomes the progress made by UNTAES in implementing the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (S/1995/951, annex) signed on 12 November 1995 (the Basic Agreement), and in promoting the full and peaceful reintegration of the region of Eastern Slavonia into the Republic of Croatia. It stresses that the restoration and maintenance of the multi-ethnic character of Eastern Slavonia are important to international efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region of the former Yugoslavia as a whole. It reminds both parties of their obligation to cooperate with UNTAES. It underlines the importance of economic rehabilitation of the Region, the establishment of a Transitional Police Force and the return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes in the Region, as well as the importance of the promotion by the Government of Croatia of the return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes of origin elsewhere in the Republic of Croatia. It further underlines the importance of the holding of elections in accordance with the Basic Agreement, once the necessary conditions have been established.

"The Security Council reminds the Government of Croatia of its responsibility to

cooperate with UNTAES and to create conditions conducive to maintaining stability in the Region. It calls on the Government of Croatia to take the necessary action without further delay.

"The Security Council recalls the statements of its President of 22 May (S/PRST/1996/26) and 3 July (S/PRST/1996/30) and again urges the Government of Croatia to adopt a comprehensive amnesty law concerning all persons who, voluntarily or by coercion, served in the civil administration, military or police forces of the local Serb authorities in the former United Nations Protected Areas, with the exception of those who committed war crimes as defined in international law. The Council notes with concern that the amnesty law and the action subsequently taken by the Government of Croatia, as described the Secretary-General in is report of 5 August, have been insufficient to create confidence among the local Serb population in Eastern Slavonia. The Council notes the general agreement reached by President Tudjman and President Milosevic in Athens on 7 August 1996 that a general amnesty is an indispensable condition for the safe return of refugees and displaced persons. It expects this agreement to be followed up by corresponding concrete measures.

"The Security Council notes with appreciation the agreement reached by the Government of Croatia and UNTAES on issues relating to the funding of public services on the territory administered by UNTAES (S/1996/648, annex). It notes, however, that this funding is not sufficient to cover all the costs of such services and it expects further funding to be made available by the Government of Croatia urgently and without conditions. It stresses the importance of ensuring a functioning civil administration so as to maintain stability in the region and help ensure the fulfilment of the mission objectives of UNTAES. The Council, having regard to its resolution 1037 (1996), also reminds the Government of Croatia of the need to contribute towards the costs of the UNTAES operation.

"The Security Council recalls that the Basic Agreement provides for a transitional period of 12 months which may be extended at most to another period of the same duration if so requested by one of the parties. It stresses the importance it attaches to UNTAES being able to complete its mandated tasks, including the organization of elections as provided for in the Basic Agreement, promptly and in full. These tasks are, as the Secretary-General notes, the building blocks for the difficult process of reconciliation. To that end, the Council affirms its readiness to consider, at an appropriate time, extending the duration of the mandate of UNTAES, on the basis of the Basic Agreement, its resolution 1037 (1996), and a recommendation from the Secretary-General.

"The Security Council expresses its appreciation to the Transitional Administrator and his staff, and reaffirms its full support for the efforts of the Transitional Administrator.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1996/35.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

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President:	Mr. Eitel	(Germany)
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	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
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	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Inderfurth

Agenda

Demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping

96-86104 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Ukraine and Uruguay, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Ramírez (Argentina), Ms. Millar (Australia), Mr. Misić (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Mr. Fowler (Canada), Mr. Londoño-Paredes (Colombia), Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia), Mr. Náthon (Hungary), Mr. Shah (India), Mr. Takht-Ravanchi (the Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Campbell (Ireland), Mr. Takahashi (Japan), Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia), Mr. Keating (New Zealand), Mr. Vilchez Asher (Nicaragua), Mr. Holter (Norway), Mr. Kamal (Pakistan), Ms. Decerega Smith (Panama), Mr. Bohayevsky (Ukraine) and Mr. Benítez-Saenz (Uruguay), took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation to the Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Peter Küng, Head of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the United Nations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda, "Demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping". The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1996/621, which contains the text of a letter dated 24 July 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

Before calling on the first speaker, I should like to appeal to all speakers to observe the newly agreed-upon practice according to which expressions of congratulations to the President of the Council should be dispensed with in order to save time. In the same spirit, the President of the Council for the month of July has graciously indicated that expressions of appreciation to the past President may also be dispensed with.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): First of all, allow me to express my full agreement with, and support for, the statement that the distinguished Permanent Representative of Ireland, Ambassador John Campbell, is going to make later as President of, and on behalf of, the European Union.

More than 100 million mines are scattered throughout the villages, fields and roads of one third of the Member States of the United Nations. Every day 66 persons are killed, maimed or scarred by this lethal weapon: an instrument of barbarity rather than of war, of revenge rather than of defence. Its primary victims are innocent civilians, the unarmed and children.

The economic devastation and terrible emotional and physical toll of this indiscriminate weapon often obstruct reconciliation, the peace process, reconstruction and the reintegration of refugees. The spread of anti-personnel land-mines jeopardizes regional stability, security and

development. It demonstrates the vital link between international security and economic development.

Many men and women of good will and vision have been crusading against this scourge. I want to pay homage to one of them: American Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont, who came here so many times to persuade ambassadors and delegations that something had to be done — and done quickly — to carry out demining and to stop mine production and export. Ever since, the ranks of those opposing this threat have greatly increased in number.

Italy wants to be second to none in stressing the need for every country in the world to stop manufacturing and exporting land-mines. As early as December 1993 my country joined the moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines, and in early 1994 Italy ceased production of land-mines altogether. As a member of the European Union we actively promoted a joint action in 1995, and as President of the European Union during the first semester of this year my country contributed to the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Certain Conventional Weapons — only a first step, but a step in the right direction.

That is why Italy supports the extension of that agreement to every type of conflict and is convinced that an effective and binding verification mechanism is needed for every aspect of its implementation. May I take this opportunity to draw the Council's attention to documents A/49/275 of 2 November 1994 and A/51/139 of 20 May 1996, which state the Italian national position and the European position at the time of our presidency.

As the President of the Council mentioned at the beginning, today's public debate is very rightly focused on demining in connection with peace-keeping operations. The Secretary-General stresses two main goals: first, to provide a secure environment for peace-keeping forces and personnel and, secondly, to implement wider mandates — such as elections and freedom of movement — for which huge mine-clearing programmes are prerequisite. In fact, mines constitute one of the most significant dangers for the deployment of any peace-keeping force. Two hundred and seventy-three peace-keepers have been victims of anti-personnel land-mines; 60 lost their lives and 213 were wounded. To prevent such casualties we need not only more sophisticated equipment, but above all better training focused on detection, recognition and reporting of mines.

Experience in Cambodia, Mozambique, Afghanistan, El Salvador and Bosnia and Herzegovina shows that, particularly in demining activities, peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance must be very closely coordinated. More resources should be allocated to the Secretariat, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) for demining programmes.

Demining stand-by capacity has been envisaged for the DHA; but stand-by modules should also be used for peace-keeping operations. Italy has made an effort, both through bilateral and multilateral programmes, and has hosted training courses in Italy for Egyptian, Pakistani and Kuwaiti personnel. Courses have also been organized in Turin by the International Labour Organization to train the trainers for Afghanistan. We think this is an example of the valuable programmes that can be pursued by the Staff College in Turin.

The resources that the international community allocates to demining also belong to post-conflict peacebuilding activities. We have pledged more than $600,000 to the trust fund for Angola and $1.1 million for Mozambique, through the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme. Italy has also meaningfully contributed to the European Union's financing for Angola, Mozambique, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Believe me, we will try to do as much as we can, because we think this field is really a priority.

Demining is crucial to international peace and security and, hence, must also remain a priority issue for the Security Council.

Mr. Inderfurth (United States): The widespread use of land-mines is one of the most critical challenges facing the international community today and tomorrow. In addition to the thousands of civilian lives that land-mines take every year — and the thousands more injured — they also cripple important international peace-keeping operations and humanitarian relief actions.

Despite efforts by the United States and many of the countries represented here today, the anti-personnel land-mine problem is getting worse. The simple fact is that far more land-mines are deployed in conflicts worldwide every year than are removed by mine clearance personnel. We estimate that some 64 countries are affected by the worldwide land-mine crisis, littered with

up to 110 million of these weapons. Approximately half of these — about 65 million mines — have been laid since 1978.

These mines remaining deadly and active long after conflicts cease, kill or maim an estimated 500 people, mostly innocent civilians, per week — 26,000 people every year.

The burden imposed by the proliferation and indiscriminate use of land-mines is beyond calculation. In the last several years the nature of the land-mine problem has changed dramatically. Land-mines have become the weapon of choice for many government and insurgent groups: they are cheap, easy to manufacture and use, difficult to detect and expensive and dangerous to remove. They can be used as weapons of terror against civilian populations to generate fear, inhibit refugee return, disrupt economic reconstruction and, as we will discuss today, hinder peace-keeping operations.

Land-mines are a major impediment to peace-keeping operations in every part of the world. Land-mines are often the greatest physical danger the peace-keepers face. Parties in conflict often use land-mines to hinder the peace process by effectively blocking the movement of people and resources.

Let me now focus on three cases where land-mines have directly hindered peace-keeping operations.

First, in Bosnia, a country with an estimated 2 million to 3 million mines, United Nations peace-keeping missions sustained more than 200 land-mine casualties, including 20 deaths since 1992. Bosnia ranks with the most heavily mined countries in the world — Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia and Mozambique. The uncertainty about the location of the mines in Bosnia denies much of the country to civilian use. Peace-keepers have been required to clear mines as part of their mission, thus diverting scarce resources from other mandated tasks. Mines impeded United Nations patrols and delayed or halted humanitarian relief operations. The Implementation Force of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (IFOR) has been a victim as well. To date, IFOR personnel have been involved in 47 mine incidents, resulting in 55 casualties, including 10 deaths and 45 wounded. The first United States casualty in IFOR was the victim of a land-mine.

Secondly, in Angola, on 27 July two Zimbabwean peace-keepers were killed and four were injured when their truck ran over a land-mine. The peace-keepers were returning from the opening of a UNITA site in the Lunda North province. More broadly, the deployment of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) was delayed for months as United Nations peace-keepers had to secure the key basing and patrolling areas for the bulk of the forces.

Angola has paid a terrible price because of the threat posed by land-mines: 70,000 amputees, 300,000 refugees, and over 10 million unexploded land-mines. In addition to peace-keeping costs, the humanitarian and social costs to Angola will be staggering as Angolans attempt to remove mines and repair their society. As land-mines continue to take their tragic toll even after the conflict has been resolved, they may well be the last, most tragic legacy of Angola's decades of strife. We applaud the fact that both the Government of Angola and UNITA have agreed to begin destroying their stockpiles of land-mines.

Thirdly, in Georgia, the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) has literally been stopped dead in its tracks. UMOMIG is mandated to monitor and verify the cease-fire in the conflict in Georgia through observation and patrolling. But UNOMIG is not patrolling in the most critical regions due to the threat of land-mines. On 9 March, a UNOMIG patrol vehicle drove onto an anti-tank mine in the Gali sector, instantly killing the driver, a military observer from Bangladesh. The other passengers, a Hungarian military observer and a local interpreter, were also injured. Other mine incidents were narrowly averted. Mines have also killed local civilians and members of the peace-keeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

We do not know who is laying the mines, but it is clear that they are people who prefer conflict and death to a peaceful resolution. Missions under Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter, such as UNOMIG, are unarmed and depend for their security on the good faith of the parties. The United Nations is taking steps to counter the land-mine threat at enormous expense in spite of its limited resources.

But the mines which interfere with the UNOMIG and CIS peace-keeping effort is only a small part of the story. Mines have also been laid in areas where they threaten civilians and block peaceful economic activity. But humanitarian demining cannot even begin until the conflict is fully resolved. We encourage the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), as well as the Georgians,

the Abkhaz and other neighbours, to plan for the day when they can begin that other demining job.

It is all too common that combatants do not remove land-mines after a conflict ends. They are left for civilian populations and peace-keepers to deal with. Although international law now requires minefield recording and measures to protect civilians in internal as well as international conflicts, most mine-plagued countries are not party to Protocol II of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW).

The United States, joining with others in the international community, has taken a leading role in conducting demining efforts worldwide. Since 1993, the United States Government has worked with non-governmental organizations and private voluntary organizations, supported United Nations activities carried out by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and encouraged indigenous mine-clearance centres to develop demining assistance programmes. President Clinton's recently announced land-mine policy directs the United States to expand its current humanitarian demining programme and begin work on developing new technologies to aid in land-mine detection and removal.

The United States has spent approximately $91 million from 1993 to the present on mine awareness and demining training programmes in 14 countries with serious land-mine problems, including, most recently, Bosnia. In June of this year, President Clinton announced a new United States initiative in Bosnia, committing up to $15 million to develop an indigenous demining capability. In addition to assisting peace-keeping operations there, the ultimate goal is to give the Bosnians the skills and equipment to locate and destroy the mines themselves. At the centre of the strategy is the headquarters, a Mine Action Centre, designed to coordinate all mine-clearance, mine-awareness, and mine-data-gathering activities in Bosnia. Operating temporarily under a United Nations mandate, the Mine Action Centre and three regional offices will eventually become an entity of the post-election Bosnian Government.

The United States provided $3.5 million to establish the Centre and will contribute up to $15 million towards continuing demining operations during fiscal year 1997. This American effort is in conjunction with those of the United Nations, the High Representative, the World Bank, the European Union, NATO's IFOR and other nations to establish a sustainable demining programme in Bosnia. Together, all these groups are combining resources, personnel and equipment to fund the longer-term mine-clearance operations and training of Bosnian deminers.

In 1997 the United States Government plans to provide approximately $50 million for research and development and demining assistance programmes. These programmes will assist humanitarian programmes and peace-keeping operations in several countries. Among the recipients are Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Laos, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, and a regional Central American programme administered through the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Defence Board for Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Demining assistance by the international community is critical to addressing the land-mine crisis. But it is not enough. These weapons must be banned. The United States has been and will continue to be a leader in the fight to eliminate anti-personnel land-mines.

In September 1994, President Clinton, addressing the General Assembly, called for the eventual elimination of anti-personnel land-mines and asked nations to join us in concluding an agreement to reduce their number and availability. He also called for Member States to adopt export moratoria on land-mines — an effort that 32 nations have now joined.

The President took another major step towards that goal by announcing on 16 May that

> "the United States will aggressively pursue an international agreement to ban the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel land-mines, with a view to completing the negotiation as soon as possible."

The United States is dedicated to eliminating these weapons, while taking into account our global responsibilities and concern for the safety of our soldiers.

A global anti-personnel land-mine ban can happen only with the leadership of all Security Council members and support from Member States. We are committed to initiating an international negotiation towards that end and are now consulting with other States on what would be the best forum for negotiations. We also intend to propose a resolution this fall at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, urging States to begin work on negotiating an international agreement to achieve a

worldwide ban, and we hope the United States can count on the support of all Governments in this forum.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the German presidency of the Security Council this month for convening this important meeting on such a vital subject. May I also express my Government's congratulations to the German Government for its seven-point programme on anti-personnel mines presented by Foreign Minister Kinkel on 18 July. In dealing with the worldwide land-mine crisis, every step, by all of us speaking here today, draws us that much closer to our goal — a world free of the terrible threat posed by anti-personnel land-mines.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for his words of appreciation addressed to my Government.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): In recent years United Nations peace-keeping operations have made great efforts and achieved positive results in promoting the peaceful settlement of conflicts under different mandates of the Security Council. However, they are also confronted with many grave challenges, among which is the arduous task of demining in the theatres of operation of United Nations peace-keeping personnel. We therefore welcome the open debate on this question by the Council today and believe that it will contribute to more effective demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping operations.

One of the important factors contributing to the success or failure of United Nations peace-keeping operations is whether or not the parties concerned can cooperate closely with the United Nations and ensure the safety and freedom of movement of United Nations peace-keeping personnel.

From the hinterland of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Inguri River of Georgia, from the rugged mountain paths of Angola to the Djeletovci oil field in Eastern Slavonia in Croatia, large numbers of mines have not only severely hampered United Nations peace-keeping operations, but also posed a serious threat to the safety of United Nations peace-keeping personnel and the local people, as well as to economic reconstruction in these areas. This situation has already drawn widespread attention from the international community, and demining has become an important component of many peace-keeping operations.

Demining is a time-consuming undertaking that calls, first, for close cooperation by the parties concerned, as well as for adequate expertise and funds. The international community and Member States should therefore provide the necessary human, financial and material support for demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping operations. At the same time, training for local demining personnel should be accelerated. We hope that, with the joint efforts of the international community and the close cooperation of the parties concerned, demining will be accomplished as successfully as other aspects of the mandates of United Nations peace-keeping operations.

We also wish to point out that the discussion we are having today deals only with demining in the context of peace-keeping operations. Other issues relating to land-mines fall in the category of disarmament and should therefore be discussed and considered by other United Nations bodies.

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this formal meeting to address a rapidly growing issue: demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping. In this regard, some of the approaches outlined in document S/1996/621 call for our careful consideration.

Discussing this problem highlights the manner in which conflicts are being transformed and how the United Nations is responding to the challenges posed by humanitarian needs versus military imperatives. Indonesia participated in the international Meeting on Mine-clearance in Geneva in July 1995, reflecting its keen interest in the dilemma land-mines pose to countries immersed in or emerging from conflicts. We therefore welcome this debate and exchange of views, which will hopefully permit a better grasp of the issues at stake and enhance our knowledge of how Member States can respond to the need for demining.

Demining involves both humanitarian and disarmament aspects and in terms of the Charter remains the purview of the General Assembly. It is to be recalled that the General Assembly has deal with these aspects in the past, and adopted resolutions on them. The involvement of peace-keeping forces in mine-clearance does not in itself warrant a shift of responsibility from the General Assembly to the Security Council.

The gravity of the problems attendant upon land-mines and related devices has long been self-evident. With more than 20,000 people across the planet being killed or maimed in 1995 by mines, and considering that 85 million to 100 million land-mines remain uncleared in 65 countries, it seems that humanitarian tragedies are just waiting to happen, particularly given the fact that 20 times as many mines have been laid as have been removed. Indeed, the use of land-mines is not a static problem but a problem that continues to grow. In 1995, if 100,000 land-mines were removed another 2 million to 5 million were newly laid.

The impact of land-mines is such that it affects all facets of national life. It is a dilemma for countries which are often already underdeveloped and where life cannot return to normal because of these deadly devices. Consequently, it has become a global dilemma. The loss of lives and destitution which the civilian populations have suffered during years of debilitating conflict is only perpetuated through the continued risks they endure as they try to return to their daily lives and rebuild their communities and their countries. Mines threaten all aspects of the socio-economic life of innocent people: arable land infested with mines is rendered useless; electrical plants, water sites and infrastructures are inaccessible; maimed victims, in addition to their own suffering, become burdens to their families and tax the often insufficient medical services; children make up more than half of the victims of land-mines; refugees cannot return to their homes and villages; new groups of displaced persons are created and humanitarian aid cannot reach the populations in need. The obstruction to national reconstruction that mines create is a long-term problem. Given the circumstances I have described, my delegation welcomes the decisions of several States to impose a moratorium or ban on the production, export and operational use of these weapons. In this regard, my delegation believes that the review process of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons is essential because it offers the appropriate modality for dealing with land-mines and related devices.

Indeed, the process of demining is a long term, dangerous and expensive process which may take decades. According to International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) sources, it would cost $33 billion to rid the world of land-mines at this stage.

The United Nations has legitimately called the world community's attention to the need for mine-clearance. In this regard, we are strongly supportive of the initiative to create the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine-clearance. The pledging of $22 million has rendered it operational. Such a fund permits a rapid disbursement of funds with a great deal of flexibility and efficiency to projects of an urgent nature. We contributed to this fund following the International Meeting on Mine-Clearance, held in Geneva in July 1995, and welcome its positive development. The Organization's basic approach to land-mine-clearance has been the principle of capacity-building which is sustainable once United Nations agencies and peace-keeping forces have withdrawn from the region. The issue of mine-clearance is indeed complex, involving technical, financial, political and administrative facets. In dealing with the disastrous impact of land-mines on innocent civilians, my delegation considers the three approaches which warrant our careful scrutiny: international law, financial assistance and technical aid.

The link between peace-keeping operations and humanitarian programmes is fundamental since they both function within the framework of peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building. Indonesia supports the inclusion in peace-keeping operation mandates of provisions relating to mine-clearance work. Such operations have in the past coordinated their activities with other United Nations departments and agencies. First and foremost, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) has been the focal point for demining. An integrated approach to mine-clearance permits numerous agencies to coordinate their activities through the central office of DHA in order to operate effectively in the field. Other United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization (WHO), also play fundamental roles in demining activities, which Indonesia fully supports.

In the past year the United Nations has engaged in the implementation of demining in nine countries. Mine Action Centres were established in different countries by DHA. The mine-clearance operations in Afghanistan and Cambodia are among the most successful. Since setting up the process for mine-clearance and training can be lengthy, it is not surprising that the best results were evident in the programmes of longest standing. In Angola, the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) has set up a demining school which will become the core of the mine-clearance programme. In other areas there has been resistance: in Abkhazia, in Georgia, peace-keepers have encountered a great deal of resistance from the Abkhaz authorities, which has inhibited their ability to undertake mine-clearance and

also carry out their mandate. It remains important that mine-clearance activities in the context of peace-keeping operations are linked closely to humanitarian activities from the very beginning in order to ensure a coordinated approach to the land-mine problem and the continuance of mine-related activities following the peace-keeping mandate.

Demining efforts encounter many obstacles. The lack of adequate mapping of the layout of minefields is a serious handicap to demining teams. Time is needed to build national capacities for demining, and often teams have to use a case-by-case approach for the different countries in which they operate, since geography and mine types can vary drastically. The political will of the local authorities to cooperate with demining programmes can also seriously hinder or help in eliminating mines. Finally, the capacity to train locals to establish sustainable demining capacities will be the only way to reduce the long-term effects of mines.

The need for research in mine technology remains the area where the greatest efforts must be placed. The technology in use for mine detection and clearance is clearly outdated. The international community can undeniably contribute to the provision of properly trained and experienced instructors, trained manpower needed to carry out demining, training for local populations and appropriate and modern equipment to locate and destroy land-mines. We fully support all efforts in this context.

The disastrous effects of land-mines can be curbed through technical and financial assistance to demining activities and programmes. For this to materialize, international consensus and concerted political will among the States of the global community are imperative in order to deal with the problem at its source.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): Land-mines pose a global challenge to the international community, less because of their explosive power than because of the indiscriminate and inhumane manner in which they have been used. Brutal anti-personnel mines have been deployed with appalling frequency against civilians, maiming or killing 25,000 people per year. Moreover, mines laid during a conflict remain armed and dangerous long after the guns fall silent, threatening reconciliation efforts and undermining economic recovery. Land-mines truly are, as one commentator has called them, "weapons of mass destruction in slow motion".

The ready availability of land-mines only exacerbates the problem. Easy to produce, and with an ample number of suppliers, land-mines are very inexpensive. Not only are land-mines easy to acquire, but they are also easy to emplace. If we combine these factors with the painstakingly slow, dangerous and expensive process of mine removal, the conundrum we face is clear. The average anti-personnel mine costs as little as $3 to produce, and yet costs up to $1,000 to remove.

Demining methods, meanwhile, have advanced little since the Second World War. The net result is that land-mines are being laid far faster than they can be cleared. We now face more than 100 million mines in 65 different countries worldwide, and the figure is increasing by up to 1 million new mines per year.

My delegation believes that coping with the land-mine scourge will require the international community to make concerted efforts from two directions.

First, any comprehensive effort to solve the problem must eventually address the supply side of the equation, including through restrictions on production, export and modifications in design, such as the inclusion of self-neutralizing timers. The Republic of Korea has played a part in this effort, announcing a unilateral year-long moratorium on land-mine exports last year. The large number of land-mine producers, however, and the divergence of views on the efficacy of production and export controls, means that a consensus on supply-side issues will not come easily.

Secondly, in the meantime, there is a pressing need for the international community to focus on the end-user side of the equation, such as through demining and restrictions on the use of land-mines. What I believe we need to focus on today, in our discussion of the role of demining in peace-keeping operations, is how to enhance the capacity and efficiency of mine-clearance in affected countries.

It is against this background that I would now like to elaborate on why demining is a particularly pressing concern in the context of United Nations peace-keeping.

First, the vast majority of peace-keeping missions launched since the end of the cold war have been in response to intra-State conflicts, and it is in precisely those conflicts that land-mine emplacement is particularly widespread.

Secondly, in those peace-keeping missions, uncleared land-mines often prevent peace-keepers from fulfilling their mandate. Clearly, land-mines endanger peace-keepers, just as they do the local population. Mines stand in the way of the efforts to achieve other parts of a peace-keeper's mandate, such as distributing humanitarian aid, repatriating refugees, or ensuring fair elections.

Thirdly, land-mines can jeopardize an affected country's post-conflict economic and psychological recovery. Not surprisingly, fields will lie fallow and factories idle until farmers and workers feel safe enough to return to their jobs. Mines paralyse agriculture, render roads and bridges impassable, and impose staggering medical and psychological costs on the population.

Clearly, for all these reasons, peace-keeping operations in mine-ridden countries cannot succeed without proper demining. Now how can we ensure that mine-clearance efforts in peace-keeping are effective? My delegation is of the view that there are several concrete steps that we can take towards this end.

First, we must ensure that demining be made an integral part of United Nations peace-keeping operations whenever deemed necessary. In this regard, we wish to suggest that the Security Council should review the scope of the mandates of existing peace-keeping missions to make sure that authorization for demining is adequately provided for. Moreover, we believe that demining operations coordinated by the United Nations should be granted a mandate to continue even after the actual peace-keeping operation has ended.

Secondly, in carrying out demining tasks, we should concentrate on nourishing the indigenous capacity for safe, fast and effective mine-clearance in order to help affected countries help themselves in the long run. Ultimately, the primary responsibility for demining lies with the country affected. After all, complete demining will almost certainly require a longer time-frame than the mandate of peace-keeping missions can sustain. Before their time expires, however, United Nations peace-keepers can give affected countries a jump-start along the long road to recovery by helping them develop their own repository of demining expertise. This knowledge can then be continuously drawn upon, even after the "Blue Helmets" have returned home.

Efforts by peace-keepers to foster indigenous demining capacity will have to include the following steps: land-mine assessment, followed by training in mine-awareness; education and training in mine-clearance; and finally, transition of authority to the host Government. The transfer of demining technology and the provision of essential equipment are clearly no less important steps. In this regard, my delegation wishes to point to the valiant work of the Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC) as a useful model. Founded by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in 1992, CMAC was later reconstituted as an official organ of the Cambodian Government upon UNTAC's withdrawal. The CMAC demining programme is making extraordinary progress through the training of local deminers and such innovative concepts as a village demining programme involving selected village residents.

Thirdly, in addition to peace-keeping missions, we should strengthen the capacity and resources of the United Nations to provide rapid demining assistance on an *ad hoc* basis, whenever the need arises. To this end, it would be worthwhile to further explore how we can strengthen the United Nations demining standby capacity programme and expand the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine-clearance. In this vein, my delegation wishes to note that the Government of the Republic of Korea has been a recent contributor to the Fund.

No country can ignore the horrendous magnitude of the land-mine problem. It has become a global crisis warranting a global response. It is only appropriate, therefore, that the United Nations should have played a major role in seeking a solution. The United Nations should continue to lead us in the quest for a comprehensive answer to this global crisis. My delegation firmly believes that we will be able to find such an answer only when the whole spectrum of land-mine problems, ranging from humanitarian concerns to disarmament imperatives is fully addressed.

In tandem with many other ongoing efforts by the international community towards the eventual eradication of this scourge, United Nations peace-keeping operations give us the opportunity to contribute to the management of a more immediate danger by actively cultivating the ability of stricken nations to clear already-laid land-mines. We must help mine-ridden nations, particularly those in the developing world, help themselves in shaking off this danger, so that civilians can once again farm their fields and walk the roads of their countries without fear.

I wish finally to take this opportunity to express my delegation's sincere thanks to you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to organize this open meeting

devoted to the discussion of the issue of demining in the context of peace-keeping, and for your Government's outstanding contribution towards the resolution of this issue.

The President: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for the words of appreciation he addressed to my Government.

Mr. Martínez Blanco (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The international community has come to see the presence of land-mines and other unexploded munitions in various parts of the world as an enormous humanitarian problem with serious economic and social consequences for the populations of the countries facing these threats, which prevent refugees and displaced persons from returning to their homes and hamper humanitarian programmes and operations, national-reconstruction activities and economic development.

Every year, thousands of people die or are maimed by the explosion of uncleared land-mines. Every day, tens of millions of mines in 65 countries threaten life and limb, especially of the rural population and of children. With increasing frequency, owing to the presence of land-mines, it is hardly possible to deliver humanitarian assistance to those affected by armed conflicts, and in the worst of cases it is halted altogether. More and more, the continued manufacture and export of mines is worsening humanitarian crises and makes it urgently necessary that the international community step up mine-clearance activities and its support for national demining arrangements, and agree on a total ban on anti-personnel mines.

This is a worldwide crisis, and my delegation hails the endeavours of the United Nations through the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund and other agencies and programmes. We cannot fail also to acknowledge the active work of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the treatment and rehabilitation of the wounded, as well as the informational activities of numerous non-governmental organizations concerning the dangers posed by unexploded land-mines.

In his "An Agenda for Peace" and his Agenda for Development, the Secretary-General has laid stress on the fundamental relationship between peace and development. It is a fact that disputes and armed conflicts frequently stem from poor economic and social conditions; it is also a fact that unless the foundations for economic and social development are laid before a conflict is brought to a formal conclusion, peace will be unable to take root. Thus, efforts towards peace and security must not only focus on humanitarian relief but must also include activities that promote development.

This approach is clearly reflected in the multidimensional nature of peace-keeping operations carried out by the United Nations since 1989. Current peace-keeping operations include not only military and humanitarian relief components, but also elements for maintaining law and order, safeguarding human rights, strengthening political institutions, making possible the return of refugees and displaced persons, holding free and fair elections, and helping rebuild the national infrastructure and carry out economic and social development projects; they also include an element that has come to be very important in the discharge of peace-keeping mandates: mine-clearance.

The inclusion of this element among the functions of peace-keeping operations needs no justification. Without mine-clearance, social and economic stability cannot be restored after armed conflicts. Without mine-clearance, agriculture cannot resume, the infrastructure providing basic services cannot be repaired, transportation is impossible, the delivery of humanitarian assistance is interrupted, and refugees and displaced persons cannot return home. In other words, without mine-clearance the consolidation of peace in a nation after a conflict cannot occur.

On the basis of the experiences of Cambodia, Somalia, Mozambique, Angola, Afghanistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the importance of having peace-keeping forces actively participate in mine-clearance programmes as part of their mandates has been recognized, because this contributes to the establishment of a safe environment and, most importantly, helps create or improve national mine-clearance capacities, which is central to the assistance provided by the United Nations in this field.

My delegation strongly supports the inclusion of this element in peace-keeping operations. At the same time, we emphasize that demining alone does not constitute a comprehensive solution to all the problems relating to land-mines. The only possible solution remains their total eradication. How many more lives must be lost? How many more people must be maimed before the international community completely bans the production, stockpiling, use and export of these death-dealing devices? When will there be consensus among

Governments that a ban is the only solution to this tremendous humanitarian crisis? For all those whose lives have already been destroyed by mines, there are no answers. It is already too late.

Mr. Fedotov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): With the end of the cold war and the emergence of a whole range of conflicts spawned by the new instability, the international community is faced with a gamut of problems in demining and in overcoming the dangerous consequences of mines, which are hampering both the socio-economic reconstruction of countries affected by conflicts and the achievement of solutions to their numerous humanitarian problems.

Unexploded land-mines, which have been laid in abundance by parties to regional conflicts, continue to take the lives of thousands of people even after relative stability has been achieved. The countries that have suffered most in this respect are Angola, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. Mines have been used extensively in the conflict in Abkhazia, in the Republic of Georgia.

The problem of land-mines is particularly critical in the context of carrying out United Nations peace-keeping operations: United Nations forces are often deployed in places where mines continue to pose a serious threat, and quite a few United Nations peace-keepers are killed or maimed by mines. The widespread profusion of mines seriously hinders the movement of United Nations troops, demobilization, the escorting of humanitarian convoys and so on. In addition, the actual ability of the United Nations to effectively carry out its peace-keeping functions is jeopardized.

Similarly, the threat of mines does not allow the operational activities of humanitarian missions to be carried out as necessary. Particularly affected in this way are such United Nations specialized agencies as the World Food Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). We are convinced of the urgency of intensifying the international community's efforts to more fully realize United Nations potential for demining in zones of regional conflict.

To an increasing extent, demining is becoming an essential part of peace-keeping operations. When required, it should be included, as it is already being included, in the mandate of the relevant United Nations missions. Alternatively, machinery should be provided for exploiting the potential of regional and non-governmental organizations in this respect.

One key issue, in our view, is the coordination of the activities of various United Nations bodies and the full use of their knowledge and resources in the implementation of demining programmes, both during United Nations peace-keeping operations and at the stage of post-conflict reconstruction. We see this as a good reason for the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) of the United Nations Secretariat to keep its role as a centre for the coordination of programmes to render assistance in demining.

Here we would be grateful to the United Nations Secretariat for clarification as to the division of functions between the Department of Peace-Keeping Operations (DPKO) and the DHA; their correlation and interaction. It might be a good idea for an informal paper on this subject to be prepared for Member States. We hope that the special Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance, established by the Secretary-General, will enjoy more considerable resources than it does today and will be able to play a more active and leading role in financing programmes aimed at scientific and research work in demining, in the training of experts and specialists and in educating populations regarding safety measures to decrease the dangers of mines.

It is also important that the coordinating role of the United Nations in rendering technical assistance and in organizing national potential to implement demining locally be strengthened. Fruitful interaction has been established between the United Nations, regional organizations and individual States. We note with satisfaction the drafting in the United Nations of standard rules for the conduct of demining operations. We also consider important the establishment of a central database on questions of demining, to which all information on problems of land-mines would be channelled. Work is now under way in the Russian Federation to conclude the special federal programme on demining on the basis of the relevant programmes of individual regions affected by the problem of mines. For us, interactions with the United Nations, exchanging experience and receiving technical assistance are matters of practical importance. In the course of the implementation of peace-keeping operations on the territory of the States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), complex and expensive problems are being solved in demining. In the zone of the Abkhaz conflict alone, CIS peace-keepers have neutralized more than 21,000 explosive objects. The

increasing danger of mines in the zone of the Abkhaz conflict and the exacerbation of this conflict, since March of this year, have affected the security conditions of the local populations, refugees and displaced persons, as well as that of the personnel of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). This is seriously hampering peace-keepers of the United Nations and of the CIS in the implementation of their mandates. We have proposals to resolve this problem, which we are now discussing with the United Nations Secretariat.

We view the question of a total ban on anti-personnel mines, which has been raised by several delegations, as a subject for separate and substantive consideration and as is well known, it is being dealt with in other formats.

We believe that the international community's position on this question has been given form in the new version of the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices (Protocol II) to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. Work on that was concluded on 3 May of this year in Geneva.

On the basis that progress towards a full ban on anti-personnel mines is possible only through the emergence of real alternatives to that type of weapon, the Protocol raises the idea of an extremely far-ranging task; the implementation within a reasonable time-frame of a switch to more predictable anti-personnel mines. There is the risk that a ban on the production of anti-personnel mines, under present conditions, would lead to the flourishing of an illegal mine trade, which then might be capable of offering simplified — and therefore more barbarous — mine weapons.

We believe that the implementation of the provisions of that Protocol and its full implementation — and by as broad a group of countries as possible — would significantly diminish the problems of demining and would create more reliable protection from the danger of mines, including during peace-keeping operations.

Mr. Nkgowe (Botswana): My delegation is grateful to you, Mr. President, for the timely initiative you have taken in choosing this very important subject for our orientation debate today. Anti-personnel mines are the scourge of human society in most, if not all, conflict situations. They are a cowardly and indiscriminate instrument of war. They mercilessly kill and main their victims without warning and without determining whether they are friendly or enemy forces, unsuspecting civilian population or United Nations peace-keepers. Moreover, land-mines remain hidden and ready to claim new victims long after war has ended. Thus, land-mines have a long-lasting and traumatic psychological impact on whole populations.

The United Nations is always faced with the task of facilitating the return and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons in every peace-keeping operation. Land-mines are, however, an impediment to this process. Travelling by road to return home becomes a nightmare because of the omnipresence of land-mines. The resumption of economic activity for subsistence purposes becomes a perilous exercise. The land cannot be tilled because it is already planted with these invisible death traps. In short, all economic activity literally comes to a standstill as the roads and pathways to cities, villages, fields and watering points become impassable due to land-mines. This is the harsh reality that innocent victims of armed conflicts have to contend with long after the torturous ordeal of war has supposedly come to an end. Obviously, this deeply frustrates the hopes and aspirations of civilian populations that want nothing but the rebuilding of their shattered lives in a peaceful atmosphere free from the deleterious effects of war.

It is evident from these comments that land-mines are a menace to human life during and long after conflict situations. The international community must find effective ways of preventing conflicts, as they result in the laying of the diabolical land-mines. Where a conflict erupts, every effort must first be made to raise awareness about land-mines, and all mine-producing and mine-exporting countries should restrict the sale of these weapons to the belligerents.

Secondly, the response to a conflict that proves not amenable to preventive measures must be an automatic land-mine embargo.

Thirdly, it is not in the long-term interests of any side in a conflict to lay mines, because, much as the psychology of war obviously dictates inflicting maximum destruction on the enemy by whatever means available, land-mines are too costly to live with after war, in both human and material terms. The warring parties must therefore always appreciate that they will still have a country to share and must live together as neighbours at the end of conflict, and that land-mines do not allow the wounds of war to heal easily and quickly.

Fourthly, and most importantly for today's debate, when a cease-fire has been established or a decision has been reached to establish a peace-keeping mission, the mandate of such an operation must automatically include demining at the top of its agenda, as has already been done in some cases.

My delegation believes that because land-mines always exacerbate the already adverse humanitarian situation in any conflict, demining should always be given top priority in every peace-keeping operation. It is important that the demobilization of the combatants and the promotion of national reconciliation should go hand in hand with demining in order to facilitate the early return of civilians to their homes and to productive lives.

Military rules and procedures dictate that belligerents should mark and map their minefields. Experience has, however, shown that this never happens, and where some limited effort has been made to this end, the maps have not proved accurate enough to be of any meaningful use or assistance in the demining exercise.

While it may seem an exercise in futility to expect the warring parties to remember their obligations to faithfully mark and map their minefields, there is at present no alternative but to insist that they should do so without fail so that the process of demining can be performed with ease during a peace-keeping mission. The international community should not abandon the search for the most practical ways of dealing with land-mines, including considering instituting appropriate measures under international humanitarian law to ensure such compliance. Such measures could also act as a deterrent against the laying of mines if there were clear penalties for non-adherence to the applicable rules. This would indeed facilitate the speed with which demining could be carried out in any United Nations peace-keeping operation and thus afford the peace-keeping mission an opportunity to carry out its mandate more effectively.

All this presupposes the existence of a standardized mine-clearance technology. My delegation deeply appreciates the contributions of those countries that have always been ready to provide assistance in the field of demining technology. It is clear, however, that the demining exercise is not often carried out with the anticipated speed or the desired result, due to the lack of adequate capacity and the diversity of mine-clearance technologies. It goes without saying, therefore, that there is a need to develop an advanced mine-clearance capability and technology, and the United Nations system has an important coordinating role to play in this area, for the good of all humanity.

It is a firmly held view of my delegation that the scourge of land-mines will always be with us even if we develop the best mine-clearance technology. The ultimate solution to the menace presented by land-mines lies in the complete prohibition of the production and use of these horrendous devices of war. Mine-producing countries should be urged not only to halt the production of existing models, but also to halt the development of so-called alternatives, such as remotely delivered and self-destructive mines.

There is no doubt that war has always been a living reality in the history of human civilization and existence. It is a fact that there have always been rules and regulations governing the conduct of those who made war an industry, even in medieval times. It is therefore even more compelling for us, in the last few years of the twentieth century, to curb, prohibit and ultimately rid the world of these tools of war which inflict permanent pain on the human conscience.

Mr. Ladsous (France) *(interpretation from French)*: May I at the outset welcome the initiative that you, Mr. President, have taken in organizing this debate.

At the end of a year which will have seen the adoption of General Assembly resolution 50/70 — which sets the goal of the final elimination of anti-personnel mines — and the conclusion of work of the first Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibition or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, it was indeed particularly timely for the Council to take up the question of demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping operations.

With strict respect for the competences of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the specialized agencies and the programmes of our Organization, as well as of the disarmament forums, the international community must deal with this question in all of its aspects: disarmament, development and, of course, humanitarian aspects.

Security Council action in this area must be seen against the background of the efforts of the international community to eliminate land-mines and humanitarian interventions to restrict the effects of this scourge.

For France, the objectives are to outlaw and totally eliminate anti-personnel mines, and my country's commitment to these objectives is of long standing.

On 9 February 1993, France requested the Secretary-General to convene the Review Conference for the 1980 Convention in the very firm hope that this would lead to a substantive review of the provisions of Protocol II of the Convention.

The first Review Conference ended last May. The results achieved, even if they did not fully meet France's expectations, nevertheless represent significant progress. Substantial gains have been made, despite certain shortcomings, but this is but one stage, and the machinery adopted for annual consultations and the commitment to convene another review conference in five years both attest to the fact that States Parties to the Convention wish to continue to work together.

France considers that the efforts to put an end to the scourge of anti-personnel mines will take on full significance only through the adoption of a verifiable international agreement on the total elimination of these mines.

France's commitment to this objective is tangible and, as proof, I cite the restrictions my country has imposed on itself regarding, first of all, the export of anti-personnel mines. In 1993 France became one of the first countries to proclaim a complete moratorium. This unilateral decision covers all types of anti-personnel mines and all destinations.

In addition, France decided last September to adopt a moratorium on the production of all categories of anti-personnel mines. At the same time, it committed itself to the destruction of its stockpiles. It goes without saying that my country urges all States to join it in that decision.

We are aware of the unfortunate figures on the numbers of land-mines laid throughout the world and the number of victims killed or maimed each year by these devices. This shows a very urgent humanitarian need.

France therefore provides considerable assistance to demining activities. In our national capacity or within the framework of United Nations peace-keeping operations, we have sent demining teams and demining training teams to Lebanon, Pakistan — operation Salam in 1989 — Somalia, Cambodia, Mozambique and the former Yugoslavia. My country is now participating in operations in Angola where, since its establishment, 12 instructors have been working at the demining school of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III).

I should like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to all the specialized personnel who, with great courage, have taken on a dangerous, thankless but very necessary task. I should like to mention here the efforts made by the European Union in demining and the contributions of States to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund. The Permanent Representative of Ireland will, in the name of the European Union, take up these points in a statement with which the French delegation fully associates itself.

Given that the negotiation of universal and binding disarmament instruments and humanitarian intervention are two indispensable areas of action for the eradication of anti-personnel mines, the Council is, in the conduct of peace-keeping operations, confronted every day with the problems posed by mines. Recent debates during the renewal of the mandates of UNAVEM III or of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) have shown that the existence of mined areas and the laying of new mines directly affect the implementation of the mandates of the United Nations forces.

It is therefore important to better integrate questions linked to mines with all stages of the definition and implementation of the mandates of United Nations forces, and I shall offer here only the following few guidelines. First, we should make the contingents of United Nations forces and, obviously, populations more aware of the mine problem. Secondly, we should set priorities for carrying out demining activities and make them consistent with the other objectives of the mandates given to United Nations personnel. Thirdly, we should combine programmes for mine elimination and the establishment of national capacity for demining in countries where peace-keeping operations are being carried out. Finally, we should obviously ensure the security of personnel through the provision of protective vehicles and appropriate means of transportation.

The French delegation, in any case, is very receptive to all suggestions put forward during this debate, in its desire to have a better grasp of the problem of mines in defining the mandates that we give to the Blue Helmets.

Let us not forget that mines are a major obstacle to development. The French delegation would like to reaffirm its determination to act to outlaw anti-personnel mines, and it urges the greatest possible number of countries to join it in achieving this great objective.

Mr. Matuszewski (Poland): Allow me to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for the timely introduction of the issue of demining in the context of peace-keeping operations into the agenda of the Security Council.

The problem of mines continues to worry all of us. The efforts to resolve it have not yet produced satisfactory results. I refer in particular to the negotiations on a multilateral agreement concerning the ban on the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel land-mines. Poland is in favour of a resumption of those negotiations. Poland is on the record as supporting an early entry into force of Geneva Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons. In accordance with the provisions of the resolutions of the General Assembly calling for a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines, the Government of my country decided to introduce such a measure. The production of mines has been discontinued since the mid-eighties.

In approaching the problem of mines, we are greatly encouraged to find ourselves among many other like-minded countries. We favour an integrated approach to this issue. We are pleased to observe that this is the line followed by the United Nations. In the same context, my delegation welcomes the seven-point action programme on anti-personnel mines presented recently by Mr. Klaus Kinkel, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany.

We have devoted much attention to the problem of mines in its global dimension because of its obvious importance to the issue we are considering today: the peace-keeping context of demining.

Mines are indiscriminate by nature. They are designed to make people — military personnel and civilians alike — suffer. The United Nations experience indicates that when it comes to civil wars, to conflicts within States — the environment that prevails in contemporary peace-keeping operations — mines cease to be mere combat tools. They are targeted against civilian populations and are meant to spread terror and hopelessness. Their effects go far beyond the battlefield itself. They not only bring unspeakable suffering to people and adversely affect the humanitarian efforts of the international community, they are also directed against post-conflict peace-building and the prospects for rehabilitation of various segments of life in war-stricken countries.

Mines could seriously limit the operational potential of United Nations peace-keeping forces leading, at times, to the complete cessation of one or another of their mandated activities.

Allow me to address briefly the possible ways of dealing with the problem of mines in the context of peace-keeping operations.

First, the Polish delegation believes that while discussing the establishment of new peace-keeping operations or reviewing the mandates of existing ones, we have to take the issue of mines into consideration. In several ongoing peace-keeping operations demining is already a matter of routine. Polish contingents, among others, are known for having gained considerable expertise in this respect. We are therefore in a position to assess how demining influences the operations' activities. When appropriate and necessary, we should staff peace-keeping operations properly and equip them with technical and financial resources for demining. This in no way releases the parties to the conflict from their responsibility for mine clearance. On the contrary, one might think about making it even clearer by, for instance, including demining clauses in the agreements between the parties to conflict.

We are in favour of intensifying the educational efforts of the United Nations and the further development of training and mine-awareness programmes. We also share the opinion of those who point out the necessity of making the parties to conflicts follow to the letter the provisions of international law. I refer in particular to the documentation of minefields and the protection of the civilian population.

We are discussing a problem which is extremely complex. There is no part of United Nations work that is not affected in one way or another by the mine-infested environment in different regions of the world which urgently need the assistance of the international community.

We hope that today's debate will give new momentum to the international efforts aimed at resolving the growing problem of mines, and in particular to its peace-keeping dimension.

Those are the Polish delegation's comments, made in addition to the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union, with which Poland associates itself.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Germany's proposal for a public debate on land-mines is, in Egypt's view, a very important initiative that deserves our full support. In this regard I would like to commend the action programme presented by Mr. Klaus Kinkel, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany.

Mines are an international problem, afflicting approximately 65 countries, on whose territories are found 85 million to 100 million mines from wars and conflicts that in some cases have ended. This burdensome legacy not only brings suffering to people but also poses a real obstacle to economic development in a number of countries.

We welcome the fact that United Nations peace-keeping operations now have a mine-clearance unit in the field, where Department of Humanitarian Affairs personnel assist the Governments of concerned States to clear the mines obstructing the work of administrative and economic institutions to enable them to run more smoothly and to facilitate the return of refugees and displaced persons.

We view the problem from a comprehensive perspective because the phenomenon of mines preceded by several decades the concept of peace-keeping as it is currently understood. The problem began during the First World War and was aggravated during the Second World War, as well as during other regional wars in various countries throughout the world. These mines are present in countries which face widespread economic problems, which are compounded by the presence of mines and the high cost of clearance, in addition to the drain on technical and financial resources.

In our view there are two approaches to the problem of mines. The first is remedial, and includes the need to intensify international efforts to clear the huge numbers of mines planted during earlier conflicts. The second is preventive, and includes the measures called for by some countries: restrictions on the circulation and use of mines to curb their proliferation, the rate of which far exceeds that of mine clearance.

I take this opportunity to illustrate the first approach to the problem with a real model — the difficult experience which Egypt is going through. Egypt is one of those countries with a great many mines on its territory, especially in the Western Desert, in the area of El Alamein, west of Alexandria, which was a theatre for widespread military operations in one of the great battles of the Second World War. In addition, there are the mines remaining from four Arab-Israeli wars, particularly in the Sinai peninsula.

I am not exaggerating the proportions of this problem in saying that there are about 22 million mines on Egyptian territory: approximately one mine for every three citizens. These mines represent a real and great threat to the security, health and lives of innocent civilians and obstruct the efforts for economic and human development in these regions, which we are trying to exploit for tourism and other economic ends. They also represent a major obstacle to Egypt's efforts in creating an environment conducive to the absorption of population growth in the long and medium term.

From 1981 to 1991 the Egyptian Government made a great effort, which cost tens of millions of dollars. This led to the clearance of about 924 square kilometres, where 11 million mines were cleared. However, it is difficult, unacceptable and unreasonable that Egypt alone should bear the effort and great cost of clearing all the mines, which were not planted by Egyptians and were not used for any Egyptian interests.

I take this opportunity to remind the countries responsible for the proliferation of these mines of their legal, historic, moral and material responsibility, and I call upon the international community, particularly the countries that laid these mines, to provide the technical and financial assistance necessary for mine clearance.

Egypt has raised this subject before in a number of forums. In this connection, I would like to refer to the Final Declaration of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, held in Geneva last May. In this Declaration, there is a paragraph on the role of the countries that lay mines:

(*spoke in English*):

"*Recognizing* the important role that the international community, particularly States involved in the deployment of mines, can play in assisting in mine-clearance in affected countries..." *(CCW/CONF.I/16/(Part I), annex C, eighth para.)*

(*spoke in Arabic*):

This paragraph should be interpreted as an affirmation of the responsibility of countries that lay mines to clear them. Despite the fact that United Nations documents acknowledge that these mines are present in great numbers on Egyptian territory, Egypt, is not one of the countries benefiting from the United Nations mine action programme, which is coordinated by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in the United Nations. We consider that the absence of the United Nations mine action programme from the Egyptian territories is an unwarranted exception and does not comply with the major objectives of DHA efforts in the field of mine clearance.

I move now to the second aspect of the problem, the preventive aspect, which has to do with the constant manufacture of mines and their absorption by new markets. It is estimated that the number of new mines laid annually is 20 times as great as the number of mines cleared. The United Nations Convention on Conventional Weapons has dealt with mines to reach a final solution: the destruction of all mines. Egypt agrees with that ultimate and humanitarian objective of the Convention. However, there are certain considerations, particularly security considerations, for a number of countries, as well as the fact that all weapons, from light weapons to nuclear weapons, are considered inhumane. There are about 40 countries that agree on the necessity of prohibiting and outlawing mines. However, there are a number of other countries, particularly developing countries, that consider the responsible and legitimate use of mines an inexpensive way to protect their borders, their regional security and their strategic interests. Those countries do not own any other more advanced, less costly technological alternatives to take the place of mines.

In this context, there are several proposals. The developed countries with modern technology could provide the necessary assistance in technology transfer to developing countries so that they could develop mine production, limited to self-destructive land-mines, or land-mines rendered ineffective following a certain period of time — the so-called smart mines, which the developed countries excluded from the Convention on the prohibition of mine production. Certainly, in our modern world there should be no discrimination in favour of developed countries that own this kind of technology and manufacture mines at a time when the ban is applied only to developing countries that do not have appropriate alternatives to protect their security interests.

Before concluding, I would like to express our appreciation for the activities of DHA and peace-keeping operations in general in the field of mine-clearance. I would like to call for international support for United Nations efforts in this field through the provision of financial resources, technical expertise, modern technology and through considering the issue of mine-clearance in a comprehensive framework that includes social, economic and humanitarian dimensions, as well as all other dimensions necessary for the protection of the security of all countries.

Mr. Somavía (Chile)(*interpretation from Spanish*): One of the greatest tragedies of our time is the fact that in most of the conflicts that appear on the Security Council agenda the victims are civilians — innocent, defenceless civilians. Very often military troops of the factions or groups in conflict kill civilians of the opposing side and define their success in terms of civilian deaths. Frankly, it would be better for the purposes of world peace for those who give orders — the armed sectors of these factions — to have the courage to confront each other. But no, they are considered heroes because they kill civilians.

Why am I beginning my statement with this comment? It is precisely because anti-personnel land-mines are among the deadliest instruments, and experience demonstrates that they particularly affect civilian populations. A land-mine is an anonymous weapon, secretly placed in the hope that someone will inadvertently step on it. As stated by the Secretary-General in his statement before the International Meeting on Mine Clearance, held in Geneva in July 1995, of concern here are real weapons of mass destruction and of perverse and insidious method, ravaging civilian populations indiscriminately, frequently long after the conflicts have concluded, as we have heard in many statements this morning. The conflict ends; the mines remain.

We are discussing this issue on the understanding that, generally, it is a part of the disarmament agenda and that promotion of and agreement on necessary measures at the international level fall within the purview of the General Assembly. We are discussing today the implications for the Security Council.

We are pleased that for some time the international community has increasingly been showing its concern over anti-personnel land-mines. The figures that we have heard this morning are truly astounding: almost 70 countries throughout the world are afflicted by this scourge; 110 million mines lie planted in various parts of

the world; available stocks number 100 million; 2 million to 5 million mines are laid annually, and only 100,000 are removed. There are 360 different types of anti-personnel mines in use, and 100 companies in the world produce these weapons in 55 countries. It is truly a massive, global phenomenon that falls within the purview of collective responsibility. No one country in particular can be singled out, as this is occurring in all parts of the world in many companies in a large number of countries. That is why it is important that the United Nations, and in this case the Security Council, deal with these issues.

The international community's concern and its wish to address this problem are reflected in many proposals inspired by the Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace" and in the important initiatives of a number of countries as noted earlier by the representative of the United States.

The first proposal is a moratorium on the export of these weapons; many countries have unilaterally declared such moratoriums. In this connection, I recall that Chile has maintained a unilateral moratorium on the manufacture and export of anti-personnel mines for more than a decade, long predating the moratorium endorsed by the General Assembly.

The second was the convening of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. Failing the complete and permanent elimination of anti-personnel mines, the Conference sought at least to restrict and monitor the use of such weapons with a view to reducing their indiscriminate effects. My country generally supports instruments of humanitarian law, and, as we know, the Conference, the first of its kind, was intended to bolster the humanitarian aims of Protocol II on the use of anti-personnel mines. That intention, unfortunately, was not fully realized owing to deep-seated differences on the scope, application and other aspects of the Convention.

Chile has participated in the ongoing consideration of this subject in the United Nations, and has supported relevant proposals in the General Assembly. We have participated in demining operations in Nicaragua and El Salvador and have been invited to participate in similar operations in other Central American countries. We broadly support demining programmes adopted in the regional framework of the Organization of American States (OAS), most recently the OAS resolution on support for demining in Central America, adopted at the recent OAS General Assembly session in Panama. We have also been invited to participate in demining activities in Angola.

The third proposal by which the international community has expressed its growing concern at the scourge of land-mines was the International Meeting on Mine Clearance convened by the Secretary-General in compliance with General Assembly resolution 49/215 of 23 December 1994. It was aimed at bringing together experts and possible donors with a view to promoting United Nations endeavours and international cooperation in this area. Chile participated in that important international meeting and is pleased that it achieved success and constituted a historic landmark in the international community's activities to address the land-mine crisis.

I mentioned these three elements, which were discussed outside the Security Council, because they have a direct impact on the Council's work. I do not want to repeat the other practical proposals made in the course of our debate this morning by other representatives, relating to such areas as the return of refugees, the restoration of agriculture, the rebuilding of roads, the sharing of demining technology and the development of national capabilities. I would suggest that following this debate, which has attracted broad participation and during which we shall hear many non-members of the Security Council, the President could summarize the proposals; this would enable the Council to improve its consideration of the item, which is the point of this meeting.

I wish in conclusion to thank you, Mr. President, and the German delegation for having convened a formal meeting to consider this item; this enables us to give great political impetus to the process of demining, particularly in the context of peace-keeping operations, which fall within the mandate of the Security Council.

The elements requiring further effort, study, coordination and political will are many. With this meeting the Council sends a clear signal about the relevance of the item, an item to which my country attaches the greatest importance, both within the Security Council and in the General Assembly.

The President: I thank the representative of Chile for the kind words he addressed to me.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes this open debate because this is an important subject which needs to be discussed. However, we strongly believe that today's debate should focus on demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping operations, as the President himself emphasized at the outset. The Security Council is not the forum for the discussion of general land-mine issues. There will be a number of opportunities for that in the coming months, such as the meetings of the First Committee during the fifty-first session of the General Assembly and the Ottawa Conference in October.

But just to be quite clear on this, let me state that the United Kingdom supports a total ban on anti-personnel land-mines. We have announced that we shall destroy almost half our stocks as soon as possible, without replacement, and we have recommitted ourselves publicly to a complete ban on exports of anti-personnel land-mines.

The United Kingdom is committed to reducing the danger that anti-personnel land-mines pose for civilians and those who serve in peace-keeping operations throughout the world. It is clear that substantial support for humanitarian demining efforts continues to be essential. The United Kingdom is one of the largest contributors to these efforts. Since 1993 we have donated, bilaterally and through the European Union, a total of £17.5 million to humanitarian mine clearance and mine awareness programmes.

We fully support the United Nations mine clearance policy, which is based on the fundamental principle that the primary responsibility for taking action must lie with the host country and not, therefore, with an individual peace-keeping operation. We also support the role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in providing assistance and training to build up the host country's capabilities and to take on demining operations. But we believe that the United Nations must draw a clear distinction between mine clearance for the operational needs of peace-keeping operations, which is the responsibility of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, and other humanitarian demining requirements, which fall under the responsibility of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. It is also important to distinguish between mine clearance and activities such as training and mine awareness. The difficulties encountered in establishing viable national solutions to mine pollution in countries such as Angola and Cambodia resulted, in part, from the ambiguities in mandates between peace-keepers and humanitarian agencies.

We question therefore whether the Department of Peace-keeping Operations should be the focus for humanitarian mine clearance and mine awareness, given the coordinating role now undertaken by the Mine Clearance and Policy Unit of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. It is clear that there should be close coordination between the two organizations, but their tasks are not the same.

The United Kingdom armed forces have undertaken mine clearance training for the United Nations in countries such as Pakistan and Cambodia. But, in common with the forces of a number of other European nations, they undertake mine clearance work only where it is necessary for the success of the military operation in hand: their aim is to clear sufficient mines to allow them to complete their mission. Humanitarian demining, on the other hand, requires the methodical removal of all mines in a given area. It seeks to reduce risks to civilians, enables local populations to become more self-sufficient, helps the displaced to resettle, and promotes the resumption of normal development. Responsibility for establishing such humanitarian clearance programmes must, in our view, remain with the humanitarian and development agencies, under the overall guidance of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

The military undoubtedly has a valuable contribution to make to mine clearance, but the precise nature of this contribution needs to be defined at the outset of a particular peace-keeping operation. Demining as undertaken by the military may not be the most cost-effective means of humanitarian land-mine clearance, and military clearance standards and techniques may not be compatible with the humanitarian standards recommended by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Humanitarian mine clearance is a slow, painstaking and methodical process. There are many non-governmental organizations and private companies which, under the coordination of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, are better suited to the task of humanitarian demining.

Wherever there is a serious mine threat to United Nations peace-keepers, adequate detection, clearance and protection capabilities must be urgently provided to enable them to fulfil their mandate. But not all United Nations peace-keeping operations face similar mine threats. Demining might not always be necessary, and in some circumstances the premature removal of long-established minefields might even add to instability. But in all cases it is essential that the parties to a conflict

should guarantee that they will desist from further mine-laying once a peace-keeping operation is established.

We understand that some speakers today will suggest that there is a case for the establishment of a demining stand-by force. For our part, we rather question this. The international community is normally aware in advance of the need for mine-clearance operations, which are usually undertaken only when a conflict is over. Donor countries are unlikely, in our view, to be willing to designate equipment or facilities which, if they are to be available at short notice, would sit idle in the meantime. The United Kingdom would not be able to put mine-clearance trainers on permanent stand-by, but we do remain ready to consider each request on its merits.

During his statement, my colleague the Ambassador of Egypt referred to the problem of Second World War minefields in the Western Desert. The United Kingdom has handed over to the Egyptian Government all maps and other information in our possession about Second World War minefields in Egypt. When he visited Egypt in November 1995, Mr. Rifkind, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, offered our assistance in clearing Second World War land-mines. As a result of subsequent discussions, we have provided a substantial package of assistance which includes mine detectors.

Finally let me thank you, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to discuss this important issue. We hope that what we and others have to say today will provide food for thought for the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peace-Keeping Operations. The humanitarian disasters caused by the indiscriminate and irresponsible use of land-mines are, of course, of concern to us all. This problem fully deserves the increased attention of the international community, and the United Kingdom is committed to ensuring that we address these issues urgently and effectively.

Mr. Lopes Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) *(interpretation from French):* Allow me first of all to thank you, Mr. President, for the words of welcome which you kindly addressed to me and to my delegation.

The consolidation of peace as envisaged and conceptualized by the Secretary-General in his Agenda for Peace requires national reconciliation, among other things, for the socio-economic reconstruction of a country within the framework of peace-keeping operations. However, an indisputable prerequisite for any national reconciliation that is to be genuine and lasting, is the freedom of movement for individuals. The existence of anti-personnel mines in a country forms an obstacle to such movement of populations.

The problem of land-mines throughout the world has been further exacerbated during the past year. Continuing disturbances throughout the world and the outbreak of new conflicts have contributed to the proliferation of mines, with all the attendant long-term socio-economic consequences for civilian populations.

At this very moment, as I am speaking to the Council, a mine has perhaps just exploded in one of the more than 60 countries afflicted by this thing man has invented to achieve power and supremacy. It is a bitter heritage and painful memory of the recent past whose consequences continue to haunt the daily lives of millions of human beings.

Yes, somewhere in Afghanistan, in Angola, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or in Cambodia, Croatia, El Salvador, Mozambique and Yemen — the list is unfortunately too long to mention all the countries — a child on the way to school has just, unfortunately, placed his small foot on a mine which, upon exploding, has transformed him into a human wreck. Another explosion has brutally taken the life of a mother seeking water or wood at a nearby river. Mines are exploding every day in many countries of the world, causing irreparable damage to the flesh of their hapless victims and stirring in our hearts a sadness, indeed, a boundless remorse.

In view of the seriousness of this scourge, the Security Council — thanks, Mr. President, to your initiative — is today focusing, as it should, on a serious problem, a genuine threat, by debating urgent and effective measures to take against a formidable enemy: the 118 million active mines scattered throughout more than 60 countries. What a tragedy!

The role of the United Nations, whose mission of peace today requires its full meaning through consensus on this priority issue, can only be effective and bear fruit if it is accompanied by the commitment to actively participate in the effort of national reconstruction. Peace, to blossom and become firmly rooted, must emerge from an improvement in the living conditions of the populations concerned.

This, fortunately, is something we have understood, as Members of the United Nations. And this concept, backed by our unanimous adherence, is taking the most

diverse forms, manifesting itself everywhere in concrete and admirable ways, even in the most remote corners of the globe.

Demining operations today represent a formidable challenge for the United Nations soldiers of peace, true heroes deserving of the solemn tribute we pay them here for their courage and their spirit of sacrifice and selflessness.

Yes, alas, there are also victims among the Blue Helmets: more than 200 wounded and 60 dead — too many victims, in truth, for mines are everywhere along roads, in villages, on bridges, on riverbanks, even in schools and hospitals.

What a tragedy, what a mad will of man to wish to destroy everything to ensure his supremacy. Mines remain active for decades and pose a lasting danger to the populations of the regions where they have been laid. There can be no more normal life for villagers once a mine has exploded nearby. Fear takes root in the cornfields and rice paddies. Parents are reluctant to send their children to school. The future is thus taken hostage.

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau considers that the use of all types of mines should be prohibited, banned. Their production and export should be forbidden. In addition, existing stocks should be destroyed. Moreover, even military experts consider the strategic military usefulness of mines to be more dubious than ever. We are dealing with a weapon that kills or leaves its victims mutilated for life, with no possibility of continuing to live normally. The innocent victims are innumerable and, unfortunately, include many children: there are too many amputated, blinded children, pointlessly martyred, nameless and unsung victims of futile and unending wars.

This shows how useful, important and timely our debate today is. The international community must be able to provide the legal instruments for a total ban on mines and the destruction of mines. Important steps have already been taken in this direction, and negotiation to this end must be pursued.

The success of the peace mission of the United Nations is at stake. Success will be incomplete if the effort for national reconstruction in the countries concerned does not enjoy the continued support of the international community, which must endow the United Nations, and in particular the soldiers of peace who are acting on behalf of all of us, with the essential tools to carry out their noble mission.

We must do everything in our power to put an end to this tragedy, for it constitutes a permanent threat to the lives and physical integrity of individuals. Objectives such as a total ban on anti-personnel mines, a complete ban on exports of these wretched devices and effective demining must be essential elements of the new joint action of the United Nations. Furthermore, we encourage the international community to undertake immediately to seek solutions to problems caused by anti-personnel land-mines, with a view to eliminating them for ever and putting an end to this global calamity that kills or permanently mutilates hundreds of victims each week in many countries of the world.

We hope that the International Meeting on Mine Clearance, convened by the General Assembly — and held in Geneva from 5-7 July last year — will stir a greater awareness of the various aspects of this problem and will move the international community to greater cooperation and stronger political and financial support for United Nations activities in this area.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Germany.

Statistics, as the popular saying goes, can be deceiving, but some, unfortunately, are full of sad truths. The casualty report of the United Nations Land-Mine Database is a 30-page-long document with an endless list made up mostly of United Nations peace-keepers and military or civilian personnel killed or wounded by land-mines. There have been 19 incidents in Cambodia since March 1996, 30 incidents in Angola since April 1995 and 97 in Bosnia and Herzegovina since April 1992, to name just three cases. Every figure represents an individual human being. Let me just recall the most recent deaths, those of two Zimbabwean peace-keepers, and the severe injuries suffered by two supervisors and a student in Angola. Even more sadly, conflicts in which mines are being used indiscriminately appear, despite all international efforts, to be on the increase. Has this everyday suffering by people who were sent out to maintain peace been given the attention it deserves? The answer, clearly, is no.

Moreover, land-mines, from a German perspective, are not far away. Let me remind you that 1.3 million mines were laid along the almost 1,400 kilometres of the

former inner German Iron Curtain. The threat and the effect of those mines are still vivid in our memories.

That is why we are grateful that the German initiative to hold an open debate on the topic of demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping met with the consent of Council Members. Previous statements have made it quite clear that this exchange of views is considered to be timely and necessary, and I am looking forward to the statements to follow. Let me seize this opportunity to fully align myself with the statement to be made by Ireland later today on behalf of the European Union.

It is generally agreed that mine clearance is necessary in order to provide security to United Nations missions and their personnel; and, in fact, mine clearance is already part of numerous United Nations peace-keeping operations. But more could and should be done to enhance United Nations capabilities in this area. Recent casualties among Blue Helmets and mission personnel in Angola and Bosnia — which I mentioned earlier — have again, in a tragic way, underlined the importance of this task. The United Nations Secretariat, in particular the demining unit of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO), deserves to be commended for its achievements in this field, but it needs to be given even more support. In this respect, I would like to point to three areas.

First, as in peace-keeping in general, rapid deployment of demining personnel and equipment is of fundamental importance. Obviously, roads and crucial transport links should be cleared of mines before the main contingents of peace-keepers arrive, and not while they are already operating. Unfortunately, to date, a far too long deployment period of three to six months is the rule rather than the exception. Here, the creation of rapid reaction capabilities, possibly including a range of easily deployable demining stand-by facilities, could be a step forward. Such arrangements may benefit from the growing impact of mechanical mine-clearance systems, which have proven to be effective and efficient and will allow reductions in the number of personnel involved. But, first and foremost, Member States have to be willing to facilitate this task.

This brings me to my second point. Lessons learned from past peace-keeping operations, especially from the failures, have often highlighted the particular importance of clear and practical mandates. This also applies to the element of demining. Provisions for mine clearance have often been implicit — contained, for example, in a request for freedom of movement. This makes the task of the Secretariat and other agencies rather more difficult. Such provisions deserve a mention of their own. They should be made an explicit element of mandates, wherever necessary, in order to give clear guidance to those who are meant to implement them.

A third area of possible improvement is the organization of work within the United Nations system, the rational delineation of responsibilities and clear hierarchies in decision-making. This should apply to responsibilities both within the United Nations Secretariat and with regard to other United Nations agencies involved in mine clearance. It is true that the operational task of the demining unit of DPKO is distinct from the humanitarian approach towards demining in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA); and yet one may be allowed to wonder whether some greater integration of demining activities aimed at United Nations personnel, on the one hand, and at local populations, on the other, combining the shorter- or longer-term perspectives, might not be a more efficient way of handling these issues.

Please allow me a little excursion in order to make my point even clearer: Can one really draw a clear fault-line between the one and the other? Does not operational demining, at least indirectly, also benefit the population of the area concerned? I do not intend to challenge the somewhat different natures of peace-keeping and so- called humanitarian demining; and, of course, compliance with the mandates remains the first priority. But it is my feeling that demining in peace-keeping should not dogmatically have to limit itself to the concerns of mission personnel. The welfare of the local people and their protection from the danger of land-mines should also be seen as a possible element of conflict resolution and, thus, a task of peace-keeping in a wider sense.

I am aware that here I have touched on the borderline between peace-keeping and what we are used to calling peace-building. We all agree, I trust, that successful peace-building and the restoration of conflict-ridden areas and war-torn societies often depend on effective mine clearance and mine-awareness programmes. The Secretary-General has, again and again, emphasized this context. As early as 1992, in his Agenda for Peace, he stated:

> "De-mining should be emphasized in the terms of reference of peace-keeping operations and is crucially important in the restoration ... when

peace-building is under way: agriculture cannot be revived without de-mining and the restoration of transport may require the laying of hard surface roads to prevent re-mining." (*S/24111, para. 58*)

I underline this with a telling example of our very recent Council discussions, this very morning: in Eastern Slavonia, the success of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) and the recovery of the area are seriously hampered, a major reason being that the oil fields, a primary source of income for the region, are for the time being still infested with mines and cannot produce. The ensuing lack of local revenues means that there is no money available to pay the employees of the local administration — a serious problem with which UNTAES has been struggling now for quite some time.

Moreover, lessons drawn from typical cases of peace-building, be they in Mozambique, Angola, Cambodia or Rwanda, show that peace-building activities usually cannot wait for the end of a conflict. In order to guarantee a smooth transition from peace-keeping to peace-building, but also in order to enhance the success of ongoing peace-keeping operations, elements of peace-building, or the lack thereof, have proven to be of crucial importance to the outcome of the operation. As a consequence, planning, possibly even implementation, of such elements should be taken into account from the very outset of a peace-keeping operation. For reasons mentioned earlier, this particularly applies to demining efforts. The international community must feel the obligation to start humanitarian mine clearance wherever and as early as possible. Any other approach would be cynical towards the victims.

This being said, we cannot but also focus on the other side of the equation. Thus far, I have talked about demining, the elimination of existing mines or minefields, within a peace-keeping context. The picture would be incomplete, however, without an attempt to also address the root causes of the problem — the laying of mines and the re-mining, as stated by the Secretary-General.

We all know the terrifying statistics about the frequency and costs of eliminating mines compared to the frequency and costs of laying them. While striving for improved demining, we therefore have to increase our efforts to prevent the laying of new mines. While the international community should be ready to step up its assistance in mine-clearance and related programmes, the major responsibility lies with the parties that lay the mines. We cannot allow this simple fact to be forgotten.

This has a macro- and a micro-dimension. At the macro-level, efforts to reach an international ban on anti-personnel mines have to continue in other forums. The recent Review Conference for the United Nations Convention on Conventional Weapons fell short of this broader target. Germany, for one, relinquished totally and unconditionally the use of anti-personnel mines, as underlined again in the recent seven-point action programme on anti-personnel mines presented by our Foreign Minister, Mr. Kinkel.

But the issue also has a micro-dimension, more directly linked to concrete peace-keeping operations. It must be our interest, and in particular the interest of the Security Council, while a peace-keeping operation, including demining activities, is ongoing, that the parties to the conflict abstain from laying new mines. Mandates should attach additional importance to this element and contain provisions, wherever necessary, to prevent irresponsible behaviour on the part of the parties to the conflict. Affected countries must be ready to play a larger role in tackling the problem. Peace agreements should therefore contain provisions for the former warring parties to actively contribute to mine-clearance efforts. In order to facilitate this task, the international community should be ready to provide training personnel in order to turn former combatants into active deminers. As one step in this direction, Germany, on a bilateral basis, is going to offer mine-clearance training in Bosnia. Mine-clearance and assistance programmes in Afghanistan, Mozambique, Angola, Cambodia, Nicaragua and Laos, as well as assistance to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in establishing a mine-documentation database, have been the other major areas of German activity in this field to date.

Let me summarize and conclude. It was in January 1992, at the end of the meeting of 31 January at the level of Heads of State and Government, that the Security Council, for the last time, commented, in a broader approach, on the impact of particular weapons and armaments on United Nations peace-keeping and the maintenance of international peace and security. One issue, however, did not at that time get the attention it undoubtedly would have deserved from our perspective today: the issue of anti-personnel mines and their devastating effect on innocent people within and beyond the peace-keeping context.

Today's debate is one step towards closing this gap. Let me simply express my hope that, on the basis of all

the constructive ideas which we have heard and are going to hear, we will be able to come up with some concrete proposals for practical improvements of demining efforts in a peace-keeping context.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): The United Nations estimates that some 2 million to 5 million anti-personnel land-mines are deployed each year, added to the 100 million already laid in the ground. We are becoming more aware of the devastating consequences of these devices in terms of death and injury, and this awareness, to a large extent, results from the leadership of the United Nations in raising public awareness.

The economic and social impact of land-mines is also becoming better known: land-mines destroy infrastructure, contaminate agricultural land, make it impossible for refugees and displaced persons to return home and place an unsustainable burden on social assistance services in States emerging from the upheavals of war.

Less well known to the public is the pernicious impact that land-mines can have on peace-keeping operations. We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for drawing attention to this aspect, among others, of the land-mine crisis by taking the initiative to hold this open meeting of the Security Council.

Canada has adopted a two-track approach to putting an end to the tragedy of land-mines. The first track addresses the immediate problem of land-mines already in the ground, causing injury and death each day, as we have just heard. We have set up an active programme of demining assistance and victim rehabilitation in a number of countries. We are also looking for ways to enhance our efforts through fostering the development of Canadian capabilities in this field in order to deal with the many challenges facing mine-affected countries in, for example, Central America. The second track of our approach relates to the longer term, but ultimately more important, need to halt the deployment of new mines. That is why we, along with many other countries, are promoting an agreement to ban anti-personnel mines worldwide.

Canada has a deep and long-standing commitment to the international-security vocation of the United Nations and has participated in all major United Nations peace-keeping operations to date. It is always risky to send young soldiers abroad to secure and maintain peace. However, those soldiers ought not be exposed to the additional risk of encountering the random horrors of land-mines in such circumstances. In recent years Canadian Blue Helmets, along with those of other countries, have risked their lives in the always dangerous task of mine-clearance - in Kuwait, Cambodia, Croatia, Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda and elsewhere. In the last five years, two Canadian peace-keepers have been killed and 22 seriously injured by mines.

Moved by its deep concern over the economic and social repercussions of land-mines and by the belief that mine-clearance is an essential component of humanitarian reconstruction, Canada has taken steps. Expert personnel from the Canadian Armed Forces have been instrumental in developing independent mine-clearance capabilities in Afghanistan, Angola and Cambodia. Indeed, the Mine Action Centres in Angola and Cambodia, which owe their existence to Canadian and other advisers, provide a model for the development of indigenous mine-clearance capability in other parts of the world.

(*spoke in English*)

Since 1993 Canada has provided more than $6 million for United Nations-sponsored mine-clearance activities in Afghanistan, Angola and Cambodia, through the Canadian International Development Agency. Canada announced in June that it would also provide financial assistance to the mine-clearance programme of the Organization of American States (OAS).

In addition to providing financial assistance for country-specific or region-specific mine-clearance programmes, Canada has also provided an initial contribution of $200,000 to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance and funding to the International Red Cross for medical treatment, including rehabilitation and artificial limbs for victims of land-mines.

If we are to have real impact in addressing the economic and social cost of land-mines, and if we are to confront successfully the challenges they pose for peace-keeping operations, we have no option but to seek urgent action by the international community to eliminate these weapons and ban their use. We know we are not alone in

arriving at the conclusion that we must now move to a global ban on these weapons. Nor are we alone in appreciating how difficult it can be for countries to come to view the costs and benefits of these weapons from a different perspective in order to weigh their military value against the devastation they cause among civilian populations.

There are those within the international community who for many years have been challenging States to view these weapons from a different perspective. In this regard, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the roles the International Committee of the Red Cross and, most importantly, its forceful, convincing and dynamic President, Cornelio Sommaruga have played in highlighting the need for countries to take urgent action at the national and international levels to eliminate the scourge of anti-personnel mines.

To move this international effort forward and to build upon the important international meetings and negotiations that have taken place to date, most recently in Copenhagen, Canada will host an international strategy session in Ottawa from 3 to 5 October, drawing together the growing community of States, international agencies and non-governmental organizations that are committed to a global ban. The meeting will seek to integrate the efforts of these various communities in developing a comprehensive approach to the land-mine issue so that our efforts to assist victims, to clear mines and to control the use of mines become mutually reinforcing.

We hope that the States that join us in October will, among other things, endorse an Ottawa declaration and action plan that will establish a set of commonly agreed strategic objectives in order to move the international community closer to a ban on anti-personnel mines. Specifically, we hope that they will agree upon a series of concrete actions to be taken at the global, regional and national levels by Governments, international agencies and non-governmental organizations to achieve these objectives.

The Ottawa meeting will provide an opportunity to work towards a resolution for the fifty-first session of the General Assembly to express the commitment of Member States to support a global ban on anti-personnel land-mines; to implement national moratoriums or bans on the operational use and export of anti-personnel mines; and, most importantly, to position us to move quickly to negotiate an international agreement to ban these mines.

But the Ottawa meeting will be only the first step. To maintain momentum on this issue, we will also work with partners to establish a programme of activities in the coming year, including a follow-up conference to the Ottawa meeting to review and to lock in our progress in achieving a global ban on these weapons.

Global momentum is building. All Members of the United Nations have endorsed the eventual elimination of anti-personnel mines. Many have gone much further. More than 40 countries have called for a comprehensive ban on anti-personnel mines; almost 30 countries have already moved to impose unilateral restrictions on the operational use and export of anti-personnel mines. We expect to see these numbers grow further by the time we get to the General Assembly.

Regional organizations are leading the way in seeking to address the land-mine crisis. In June the General Assembly of the OAS adopted a resolution which commits the members of that organization to act on this issue. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum, the Organization of African Unity, and the G-7 are among other multinational bodies that have taken action on the land-mine issue.

Our hope is that all Members of the United Nations will be able to take practical steps to demonstrate a commitment to the achievement of a global ban on anti-personnel mines.

The Ottawa conference will, we anticipate, be an important step in this direction. We look forward to working with all partners in pursuit of a world free of the menace of anti-personnel mines.

The President: There are a number of speakers still remaining. In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting now.

The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m. and resumed at 3.30 p.m.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Keating (New Zealand): Let me start out, Sir, by conveying to you my congratulations: congratulations, first, on your initiative to put this item on the agenda of the Security Council; and secondly, congratulations on

your assumption of the presidency. It is a great honour and privilege for me to sit here at this table with you as President. In that sense, I would also like to convey our thanks and congratulations to Ambassador Dejammet and all the French delegation on the work they accomplished for the Council last month.

The scale of the problem caused by land-mines is immense. It presents a huge challenge to the international community. The devastation which mines wreak on the lives of thousands of people is one of the greatest outrages of our time. These same mines also undermine the efforts of local populations to realize the potential for economic development that peace brings.

New Zealand therefore gave strong support to the action taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/215, to convene in 1995 the International Meeting on Mine Clearance. We all learned at that conference in Geneva that there are now more than 110 million land-mines in the ground of more than 60 countries, and even worse, that although we remove some 100,000 land-mines annually, millions of new ones are still being laid.

That is a dreadful legacy for civilian populations around the globe. Hundreds of people are killed or maimed each week, most of them innocent civilians, many of them defenceless children.

Given the scale of the problem, and its international dimension, it is indeed timely that the Security Council is now following up the efforts undertaken in the General Assembly to focus the attention of international public opinion on this problem.

The Council must also take into account the threat posed by mines to the safety of peace-keeping personnel. As casualties in Bosnia and Angola have recently sadly demonstrated, the presence of land-mines is a major inhibition to the ability of United Nations personnel to carry out their duties in support of many missions.

For all these reasons, in April this year the New Zealand Government renounced the operational use of anti-personnel land-mines by the New Zealand Defence Force. It is our hope that the tide of international opinion will turn against the use of anti-personnel land-mines, and that other countries will soon join in renouncing their use.

We call again for an immediate and unequivocal ban on all anti-personnel land-mines. The outcome of the recent Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects was disappointing because it did not go as far as we had hoped. Nevertheless it was a success in keeping the land-mines problem at the forefront of international attention. The next review conference will be in 2001. In the meantime we must take every opportunity to enhance the momentum in favour of a global ban.

New Zealand is proud to have been actively engaged in and to have made a significant contribution to mine clearance efforts by the international community over many years. New Zealand has contributed demining instructors and programme management personnel from the New Zealand Defence Force to United Nations operations in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mozambique and, most recently, Angola. New Zealand personnel continue to serve in this capacity in Cambodia, Mozambique and Angola.

We have also provided financial support for United Nations efforts in demining. In July 1995 the New Zealand Government announced at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance a pledge of $100,000 per year for the next three years to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance. This year the Government increased the annual instalment to $250,000. In addition, New Zealand continues to provide substantial funding to the Cambodian Mine Action Centre and to the unexploded ordnance programme in Laos.

New Zealand has also provided financial support for the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) Mine Clearance and Policy Unit, and two New Zealand Defence Force officers are currently attached to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO) and the DHA respectively as demining advisers.

New Zealand has welcomed the Secretary-General's moves to improve the ability of the United Nations to manage and conduct land-mine related operations: first, the establishment of the Voluntary Fund, which provides a necessary and timely mechanism to channel funding to demining operations; secondly, the establishment of specialized demining units within DPKO and DHA; and thirdly, the designation of DHA as the focal point for the United Nations for mine clearance activities.

These are welcome first steps. But notwithstanding the progress that has been made to date, there remains

much to be done to ensure a more seamless approach to the conduct of the various mine related tasks through the life of a mission and beyond.

There is a need for the mandates given by the Security Council to include strategic recognition and direction on mine issues, such as operational and humanitarian mine clearance, mine awareness, data base information gathering and the establishment, through training programmes, of indigenous demining capabilities. This would better enable the Secretary-General and mission planners to allocate appropriate resources towards achieving the objectives set, and ensuring a smooth transition from demining as a peace-keeping requirement to demining as a long-term peacebuilding activity.

There is a role for the Council in more clearly defining the responsibilities for the various mine clearance tasks among the agencies involved in a peace-keeping operation. We believe that there is a need to rationalize in order to avoid duplication. This was recognized this year by the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, which called upon the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to provide a more coordinated approach between the demining units of DHA and DPKO.

Now once that is done, we would urge the Secretary-General, as a matter of the greatest priority, to seek the means to equip fully those with land-mine responsibilities at United Nations Headquarters. Until this is done, the effective implementation of mine clearance programmes will continue to be hindered, as will the ability to apply lessons learned to new missions. Similarly, the creation of uniform operating procedures and standards that will benefit both training and the conduct of operations awaits the formation of an effective United Nations Headquarters element.

We would see merit in a structured review of the mine clearance issues from past peace-keeping operations, so that lessons could be drawn for the future. It would be very useful for the Council to request such a review in a presidential statement, as a follow-up to this meeting. Perhaps this task would be a valuable new project for the Department of Peace-keeping Operations "lessons learned unit".

It is apparent that operations in areas with a significant mine threat also require special consideration. How best to achieve the mission in such a situation and how to ensure the safety of personnel are direct Security Council responsibilities. We believe that the demining effort must be timely, well-trained and properly equipped. New Zealand would see merit in examining, within the standby force concepts currently under investigation, the possibility of a rapid mine clearance capability that could be employed before or at the beginning of an operation. Consideration should also be given to acquiring greater numbers of mine-protected vehicles and developing operational concepts and standardized procedures to counter the mine threat. This is a further element which, we believe, could usefully be reflected in a statement by the Council.

Clearly there are substantive issues requiring urgent action within the United Nations system if the United Nations is effectively to discharge its responsibilities in mine clearance in both the peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building settings. Germany's initiative in calling this meeting of the Security Council provides an important opportunity for doing this. Other, complementary, initiatives have been announced by Canada and Japan, and are strongly supported also by New Zealand. We welcome all of these as signs that the international community is determined to address head-on the land-mine threat. I can assure the Council of New Zealand's continuing commitment and support in that endeavour.

The President: I thank the representative of New Zealand for the kind words he addressed to me, which were somewhat outside the newly agreed upon practice. Since we are outside that practice, let me add that I understand that the representative of New Zealand is leaving New York for good. We wish him well.

The next speaker is the representative of Ireland. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Campbell (Ireland): I am grateful for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the European Union. The following associated countries align themselves with this statement: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. Iceland has also aligned itself with this statement.

Mines and the scale of human destruction which they cause are an issue on which public concern is growing around the world. Most recent estimates suggest that there are up to 110 million unexploded land-mines spread in almost 70 countries around the world. More alarming still is the number of new mines being laid

every year: between 2 and 5 million. Even where peace-keeping operations are in force, parties to the conflict continue to lay mines, thereby increasing the risk to peace-keeping personnel, for whom mines often constitute the most significant danger. The human scale of the destruction is horrific, with, at times, more than 800 people, mostly civilians, being killed each month and thousands more being maimed.

The European Union welcomes the decision by the Security Council to hold an open debate to consider the important issue of demining with particular reference to United Nations peace-keeping operations. The human and material costs associated with land-mines are a matter of increasing international concern. The subject is under ongoing consideration in the General Assembly. Given the responsibility of the Security Council for peace-keeping operations, debate here is timely on ways to deal more effectively with these problems in the context of peace-keeping operations and their mandates, which are of special concern to members of the Council and all troop contributors.

The problem of land-mines has a threefold dimension: it is a grave humanitarian problem; it is and must be a disarmament priority; it is also a development problem. Only by tackling the problem in all its dimensions can the international community and the United Nations take decisive steps to address the terrible scourge of the indiscriminate use of land-mines.

The States members of the European Union are collectively the largest contributor to peace-keeping operations in terms of personnel, as well as the largest contributor to the overall budget of peace-keeping operations. Members of the Union have participated in operations over the past 10 years in which the removal of land-mines and other types of mines have derived solely from the specific nature of the peace-keeping operation.

It is valuable to consider the degree to which mine clearance activities have been adequately addressed in peace-keeping mandates. A particular concern is that the enormity of the mine clearance task and the costs attached to it have often resulted in the issue being inadequately addressed even where the seriousness and scale of the problem were well known to the United Nations from the outset. The case of Cambodia provides just one example of this.

We welcome therefore the increased importance which the relevance of demining in peace-keeping operations is being given within the United Nations Secretariat, and we strongly encourage the efforts being made to improve coordination between the relevant departments in this regard. Effective and timely coordination must be assured between the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA). Other relevant departments and agencies of the United Nations should also be closely involved. We also attach importance to this coordination being fully reflected in the field structures through the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. Due regard should be given to the long-term responsibilities of DHA in demining activities.

Other steps should also be considered. These could include ensuring that when a peace-keeping mandate is being prepared, the responsibilities for mine clearance programmes of DPKO, DHA and the parties to the conflict are clearly defined, with more attention being given to timetables and the allocation of specific tasks from the very conception of the operation. It is important that the level of financing likely to be required is taken into account at the start of the operation.

Due care should be taken in establishing the delineation within the United Nations system of responsibilities. This applies to the establishment of mine clearance priorities. This would be essential in responding to the need to open or establish vital infrastructure, thereby enabling the early resettlement of refugees and the recommencement of the process of economic rehabilitation and regeneration.

It also applies to the implementation of mine awareness programmes at the local level, and it applies to the creation of in-country mine clearance training programmes. United Nations experience in mine clearance activities in many afflicted areas has shown that development of an indigenous demining capacity is the most successful way to tackle large scale mine clearance operations. The first step in this process is the production of a national de-mining plan and an organizational structure to put it into effect. Schools can then be established to train local field staff in standardized mine clearance, survey, communications and paramedical skills, and to provide a source of feedback on local problems so that techniques can be improved.

The European Union will study with interest the views which will be put forward by other speakers at today's important meeting. Where appropriate, we will

support initiatives which will lead to a more effective integration of mine-clearance activities into the mandates of peace-keeping operations. Our objective should be to ensure that there is as much clarity and precision as possible given to the respective roles and functions of the various agencies of the United Nations system. The ideas that emerge from this debate could be further developed in the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations.

The aftermath of mine deployment must continue to be given the utmost importance. Assistance in mine clearance and efficient and effective demining programmes, including the establishment of national mine-clearance capacities by afflicted countries, are issues to which the international community is devoting very significant human and financial resources. But much more remains to be done.

It should not be forgotten that the primary responsibility for demining lies with the parties responsible for the laying of the mines. These are, of course, not always in a position to honour this obligation. The extent to which the United Nations will have to bear responsibility must depend on the capacity of the parties to take this obligation upon themselves.

The European Union has been to the fore in initiatives in this matter. The European Union Joint Action on Anti-Personnel Land-Mines, adopted in May 1995, contained important elements on assistance in mine clearance. In addition, for the past three years we have introduced a resolution on assistance in mine clearance to the General Assembly. Last year's resolution was sponsored by 56 Member States and, like those of previous years, was adopted by consensus. The resolution sets out in clear and unambiguous terms the range of political and practical steps to be taken by the international community, but especially by afflicted countries, to carry out mine-clearance operations.

The European Union and its member States have contributed significantly to mine-clearance efforts. In particular, they have already contributed $9 million to the Voluntary Trust Fund established by the Secretary-General — by far the largest contribution. To this can be added the $80 million spent over the last four years on clearance projects, often as part of the Union's wider development, rehabilitation and humanitarian programmes in which a clear and beneficial working relationship has been established with the appropriate United Nations agencies. Most recently, the European Union has funded mine-clearance operations directly or with non-governmental organizations in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola and Mozambique. The Union and its member States are playing a major role in the military and civilian implementation of the Peace Accords in the former Yugoslavia. The Council of Ministers of the Union has adopted a decision to contribute $4.6 million to finance the work of the United Nations Mine Action Centre in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Also, the Western European Union is considering the contribution it can make to demining.

The first and foremost need is that of prevention — the elimination of anti-personnel land-mines through a complete ban worldwide.

The European Union draws some hope from the increased resolve being shown by the international community to seek solutions for the detection and ultimate destruction of land-mines. The recent Conference on Mine Clearance Technology, hosted by the Government of Denmark, with the joint support of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, has shown that the development and use of new, specialized equipment which will considerably enhance the mine clearance technology of mine affected countries is not far off.

The European Union seeks the broadest possible support in all relevant forums, including the upcoming session of the General Assembly, for the very positive recommendations of the Conference on Mine Clearance Technology, especially regarding the elaboration of international standards for humanitarian mine-clearance operations. Similarly, the European Union urges Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to cooperate in the development and application of appropriate technology for the low-cost, effective and safe clearance of land-mines.

The eradication of land-mines has now emerged as an international priority. The European Union will continue to play its full role in ensuring that every opportunity is taken to combat and end the indiscriminate use and spread throughout the world of anti-personnel land-mines and to contribute to solving the problems already caused by these devices.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Nicaragua. I invite him to take a seat at the Council and to make his statement.

Mr. Castellón Duarte (Nicaragua) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the delegation of Nicaragua and in our capacity as Secretary *pro tempore* for Central America, we welcome with great interest this meeting of the Security Council on demining as a demonstration of the special interest of Germany and of the international community as a whole in the worldwide problems caused by land-mines and the disastrous effects their indiscriminate destruction have on civilian populations and on the economic recovery of countries after conflicts and in the obstacle they place in the path of peace-keeping operations.

It is estimated that there are more than 110 million land-mines scattered through more than 60 countries. None the less, 2 million to 5 million more mines are planted every year. To mention only a few of the countries where this is truly a priority problem, where there are millions of mines, we have Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia, Laos, Mozambique, Rwanda and Somalia. The demining programmes that have been established in those countries will for a long time require international assistance, and we express our solidarity with them.

The cruelty of these weapons is shocking: thousands of dead and maimed, along with damage to the economy and infrastructure of the countries that have the misfortune to suffer from this scourge, its indiscriminate effects and the prolonged consequences of war in time of peace.

In the face of this alarming situation, the international community has begun efforts through the application of restrictive measures adopted by many Member States regarding the transfer, production and reduction of current land-mine stocks and other unexploded devices. Nevertheless, the results of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects show the lack of political will to achieve agreements regarding the establishment of an effective and binding verification mechanism. Furthermore, the existing extensions should pave the way for stronger negotiations to achieve a complete ban on anti-personnel land-mines.

This is why we have stated our country's position on this serious problem in many forums. The solution is the complete eradication of this kind of weapon from the face of the Earth. To this end, widespread and persistent political efforts are required to achieve a complete ban and sustained international cooperation for mine clearance.

In this spirit, on 28 and 29 May 1996, a regional seminar was held in Managua, Nicaragua, on anti-personnel land-mines, demining and rehabilitation. Anti-personnel mines were defined as a violation of international humanitarian law. Mexico and the countries of Central America expressed their will to establish on their territories an anti-personnel-mine-free zone and reaffirmed the will of the Governments of the region to promote national policies fostering the complete and immediate prohibition of the production, possession, transfer and use of anti-personnel land-mines. They invited national parliaments to pass legislation to prohibit and sanction the manufacture, possession, transfer and use of such mines and to establish a set of norms to guarantee job opportunities to the victims of such devices.

The seminar also encouraged Governments and the communications media to disseminate relevant information among populations exposed to the danger of anti-personnel land-mines so that they would not become victims, and urged the international community, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and non-governmental humanitarian organizations to contribute to the programmes undertaken by Central American countries for the re-education and rehabilitation of victims so as to achieve their social and occupational reintegration.

Furthermore, at the twenty-sixth session of the Organization of American States (OAS), held in Panama in June 1996, a resolution was adopted on support for demining in Central America. It emphasized the ongoing and serious problem of land-mines and their effects, which impede the social and economic development of vast and rich rural areas and have a serious adverse effect on the border integration of areas affected by these deadly devices, and it urged States members of and permanent observers to the Organization and the international community to continue to cooperate and support the demining work carried out in Central America. It also noted with satisfaction the important contributions to the demining programme in Central America made by States members, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Canada, Colombia, Peru, the United States of America, Uruguay and the Permanent Observers to the OAS, including France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain, Switzerland and Sweden.

Echoing the agreements made at those meetings, my delegation, as Secretary *pro tempore* for Central America, appeals to the international community to

continue and increase in a sustained way its assistance to demining programmes in Central America.

We would like to reiterate the point that we have made in other forums: there is an urgent need to deal with the larger issue of a ban on the export and production of anti-personnel mines. We are prepared to support initiatives to that end. It is in that spirit that we have co-sponsored the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines, until we have a total ban on these weapons.

We would also like to express our support for the seven-point programme of action on anti-personnel mines proposed on 18 July 1996 by Mr. Klaus Kinkel, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany.

Nicaragua, a state signatory to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, is aware of the importance of this international instrument and is taking the steps necessary for its ratification, which shows the high priority our country attaches to negotiations to abolish such weapons. We would also like to reiterate the urgency of concluding demining tasks before the end of this century. To this end the Governments of Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua are continuing their efforts within their respective countries.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Member States that have made important contributions to the continuation of the difficult and costly task of demining in Central America.

With the historic signing of the Treaties of Pelindaba, Rarotonga and Bangkok, the Antarctic Treaty and the Treaty of Tlatelolco, there are already four denuclearized zones on our planet. If this has been achieved in the difficult sphere of nuclear matters, why can we not declare a zone free of anti-personnel land-mines in the western hemisphere? Let us pool our efforts to ensure that the dawn of the new century sees the beginning of economic and social development for our peoples, thus making possible a peace dividend.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Owada (Japan): The indiscriminate use of land-mines is among the most pressing and dangerous problems confronting us today. The numbers are staggering: there remain more than 100 million uncleared land-mines in 68 countries around the world, primarily in areas of conflict; and between 2 million and 5 million additional land-mines are being laid each year. They are a grave humanitarian problem, causing unspeakable suffering among innocent civilian populations, and they continue to pose a serious obstacle to post-conflict national rehabilitation and development.

It is essential that the international community as a whole address this dire situation, because war-ravaged countries simply do not have the wherewithal to deal with it on their own. The United Nations, for its part, has been addressing this problem since 1994 through, for example, the establishment of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance, through the convening of a Conference to review the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, as well as through the International Meeting on Mine Clearance in Geneva. My delegation believes that the United Nations must mobilize its strength to continue and reinforce such efforts. It expresses its appreciation to the Federal Republic of Germany for its initiative in holding this formal meeting of the Security Council.

The Government of Japan has contributed more than $20 million to the mine-clearing activities of the United Nations in Cambodia, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere. At the International Meeting on Mine Clearance held in July last year in Geneva, Japan pledged an additional $2 million to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance. This had already been disbursed by March this year.

Speaking on that occasion, I underscored the need to enhance United Nations-based international cooperation in clearing land-mines that remain in areas where armed conflict has been settled and in strengthening efforts to deter the use of land-mines in the future.

In particular, Japan emphasized at the Geneva Conference that the international community, in tackling the issue of existing land-mines, must address this intractable problem in a comprehensive way, focusing its efforts in three interrelated directions: first, strengthening the mine-clearance activities of international agencies, with the United Nations as the centre of coordination; secondly, promoting the development of new technologies for land-mine detection and clearance; and, thirdly,

strengthening international assistance for the rehabilitation of land-mine victims.

At the G-7 Summit in Lyons earlier this summer, the Prime Minister of Japan, Ryutaro Hashimoto, proposed convening an international conference to discuss this three-pronged effort at the senior official level in Tokyo early next year.

But our efforts should go further than that. We must tackle the root cause of the problem: the use of this inhumane weapon called the anti-personnel land-mine. It is important that demining activities be coupled with swift and determined action to prevent a further proliferation of land-mines. Otherwise, the money and efforts that the international community puts into demining will be largely wasted.

At the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) in Geneva this spring, it was decided to strengthen restrictions on the use and transfer of anti-personnel land-mines within the framework of the CCW. It should be noted in this context that there is emerging within the international community a new momentum towards the global ban on the use of anti-personnel land-mines. The Government of Japan has decided to support such international efforts.

In fact, Japan announced last June that it had decided to undertake the following initiatives on its own, pending an agreement to be reached on a global ban: Japan will appropriately advance necessary measures to modify its anti-personnel land-mines into self-destructing ones; Japan will not plan new acquisitions of non-self-destructing anti-personnel land-mines; Japan will not make operational use of non-self-destructing anti-personnel land-mines, even in cases where their use is permitted by the strengthened Protocol on land-mines; and Japan will promptly pursue the study of such alternatives to anti-personnel land-mines as will not inflict damage on civilians.

In this spirit, the Government of Japan wishes to cooperate with like-minded countries in joining efforts towards a global ban on anti-personnel land-mines.

It is important to recall in this connection that if we are to be serious about our efforts, the problem of commercial transfer of land-mines from the manufacturing countries to the areas of conflict will have to be the subject of our careful scrutiny. Japan has been strictly adhering to the policy of refraining from the export of land-mines; it strongly urges other countries to follow this example.

Let me turn now to a specific point raised by the Federal Republic of Germany. Until now, the problem of land-mines has been discussed chiefly as a humanitarian issue and in terms of the obstacles mines pose to national reconstruction and development. Indeed, land-mines can present a major hindrance to establishing lasting peace, which is a prerequisite for national reconstruction and rehabilitation in the post-conflict situation. But at the same time, they can also seriously compromise the safety and security of personnel involved in United Nations peace-keeping operations. As we have seen in Cambodia, the Golan Heights and Rwanda, demining efforts are sometimes indispensable to enabling peace-keeping missions to fully discharge their mandates. Thus, it would seem reasonable and appropriate that, when considering future peace-keeping operations, we should keep in mind this aspect of the situation under consideration and include in their mandates, as appropriate, a demining function, in addition to strictly peace-keeping functions such as the observation of disengagement of forces and of cease-fires. This would have the added advantage of contributing to peace-building activities through the creation of a safe environment to work in, during the phase of continuum leading towards full-fledged post-conflict reconstruction and development. With this in mind, my delegation is supportive of the German proposal to consider the demining function within the framework of the peace-keeping activities of the United Nations.

In conclusion, my delegation strongly hopes that the present formal consultation in the Security Council will give a powerful momentum towards establishing a truly effective framework for working towards a global ban on this reprehensible weapon.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Holter (Norway): Anti-personnel land-mines are among the most insidiously destructive weapons commonly used in war. They continue to spread terror for years or even decades after hostilities have ended. We should all recognize that the military utility of anti-personnel land-mines is far outweighed by their cost in humanitarian and socio-economic terms. For many years, Norway has been involved in United Nations peace-keeping operations and mine-clearing missions and has been able to gain first-hand experience of the consequences of the widespread and irresponsible use of

land-mines. A bold and concerted effort by all nations is urgently needed.

We therefore welcome this open debate in the Security Council on the question of demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping. Given the Security Council's responsibility for peace-keeping operations and the very grave and direct problems which the use of land-mines represents for these operations, we believe it is extremely useful to discuss within the framework of the Council ways and means of addressing these problems in peace-keeping mandates. It is a tragic fact that over the years, hundreds of United Nations peace-keepers have been killed or wounded by mines. It is also a persistent problem that the use of land-mines by the parties to a conflict represents a serious impediment to the carrying out of the mandate of peace-keeping operations: it causes important delays, it reduces the effect of the operation, and it represents serious additional financial costs.

Important efforts are now being made by the Secretariat to improve coordination between relevant departments with regard to demining in peace-keeping operations. We strongly welcome and encourage these efforts. Coordination between the Departments of Peace-keeping Operations and Humanitarian Affairs is particularly important. Increased attention should be given to the different aspects of demining activities when mandates for peace-keeping operations are being drawn up. My delegation would like to associate itself with the interesting ideas put forward in this respect by the European Union, and we also support the suggestion that these questions could be further considered within the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations.

In a number of conflict-torn areas, demining is also an important element in the overall efforts towards achieving lasting peace and conditions for reconstruction and development. Demining, as well as measures to prevent renewed use of land-mines, as part of broader disarmament measures, should therefore also be considered in the context of post-conflict peace-building, as pointed out by the Secretary-General in his Supplement to "An Agenda for Peace".

The question of anti-personnel land-mines has a number of different dimensions: it represents a grave humanitarian problem; it has direct bearings on United Nations peace-keeping operations; it is an important disarmament issue; and it has a development dimension. It should therefore be addressed on a broad and comprehensive basis. Today's debate in this framework is a significant expression of the growing awareness of the need for such a comprehensive approach. In the view of the Norwegian Government, the only sane, humane response to the scourge of anti-personnel land-mines is their total prohibition and elimination. Norway is one of the countries that has consistently advocated a total ban on the production, transfer and use of anti-personnel mines. In June 1995 we declared a moratorium on the production, stockpiling, transfer and use of anti-personnel mines. All anti-personnel mines currently found in Norwegian military stockpiles will be removed and destroyed. According to the present schedule, this work will be completed by 1 October this year. Norway hopes that its example will add weight to the ongoing international efforts to ban anti-personnel land-mines.

The outcome of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects earlier this year fell far short of our expectations. The amended Protocol II, the land-mine protocol, does not ban anti-personnel mines and does not go as far in the area of interim protection for civilians as we and many others would have wished. While this is disappointing, it does not prevent us from welcoming the amended Protocol as an important first step on the road to a legally binding global ban. We believe that the annual meetings of States parties and the next review conference in 2001 will serve as important forums in which to maintain political pressure for a global ban.

We are convinced that the conclusion of the Review Conference is only the beginning of a challenging process which requires persistent and widespread efforts if its humanitarian objectives are to be fully achieved. In this context three points should be mentioned.

First, it is encouraging that more than 30 countries are now advocating a total ban on anti-personnel land-mines. In our view, a concerted effort by those countries will be the most effective way of continuing the fight against these weapons. The meeting to be held in Ottawa this autumn will provide an important opportunity to discuss a joint strategy for achieving a total ban on anti-personnel land-mines. Such a strategy should include a plan of action with specific short- and medium-term objectives *en route* to the goal of the total elimination of these weapons. We hope that the Ottawa meeting will be the first of a series of meetings for the countries that support this work.

Secondly, in order to build on and enhance the momentum of this movement, Norway would like to see a strong resolution at the forthcoming fifty-first session of the General Assembly, embodying the objectives of the pro-ban States. The existing General Assembly consensus resolutions on demining should maintained.

Thirdly, Norway is prepared to take part in negotiations on a comprehensive ban on anti-personnel mines. These negotiations should begin as soon as possible.

In addition to these political measures, practical efforts should be made to strengthen the capacity for demining activities in various parts of the world. The Norwegian Government would like to see a radical increase in such efforts, aimed primarily at enhancing permanent facilities and schemes at the local level. Local expertise should be developed in the fields of mine awareness, detection and clearance activities. Norway has so far trained more than 1,000 deminers and 400 mine awareness instructors in various countries. The Norwegian Government has spent more than $20 million on demining-related activities in a number of countries, and we intend to maintain or increase this level of support.

We must devote more attention and resources to improved mine clearance technology. Far more resources are set aside for the production of new weapons than for remedying the damage they have caused. Norway is about to start a pilot mine clearance programme in the former Yugoslavia, utilizing a mechanical mine clearance machine invented in Norway and developed by a Swedish company. It is expected to dramatically speed up the clearing of open fields, either detonating the mines or chewing them into harmless pieces.

We should strengthen the ability of the United Nations to initiate and coordinate demining activities throughout the world. The United Nations should also provide funding for demining activities. Norway has contributed about $1.3 million to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance. Norway is also ready to contribute expert personnel to the standby capacity of United Nations mine action assistance programmes through the Norwegian Emergency Preparedness Systems (NOREPS).

In dealing with the land-mine problem, we believe that humanitarian ideals will be best served if political stands are backed up by measures with the maximum practical effect. In this context, we cannot allow humanitarian concerns to be subordinated to military requirements.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Uruguay. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Benitez Saenz (Uruguay) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The item before the Security Council today is of the greatest importance. Anti-personnel mines are a weapon of destruction widely used throughout the world; they are particularly bad because they are indiscriminate and because they continue over time to sow death and destruction even after the end of the conflict that caused them to be laid.

The figures collected by international agencies are terrifying: more than 10 million mines in Afghanistan; nearly 15 million in Angola; between 8 million and 10 million in Cambodia; millions in the former Yugoslavia, Chad, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala, Mozambique, Rwanda and Somalia. The list goes on to include 65 countries in which mines have been laid.

The international community has made considerable efforts in the area of demining, but regrettably the results are outweighed by the efforts of those who lay more mines every year. It is important to underscore this disparity and to remember the words of the Permanent Representative of the United States, Ambassador Madeleine Albright, who has called anti-personnel mines a slow-motion weapon whose harmful effects continue for many years after the cessation of the conflict, with human destruction that does not respect age, age, creed or political affiliation.

In the framework of its peace-keeping operations, the United Nations has carried out an extensive programme of assistance to affected Governments covering not only demining tasks but also the training of local personnel and helping civilian populations to identify the presence of mines, the dissemination of information on the dangers of mines, and activities intended to abate the effects of mines, especially through medical treatment and rehabilitation.

Here the participation of Member States is vital. As a contributor of troops to peace-keeping operations, Uruguay is sharing in the endeavours of the United Nations, with special emphasis on the two aspects of providing safety and security for troops in the field, and

supporting the implementation of large-scale demining programmes in the context of a complex mandate.

Specifically, the participation of Uruguayan contingents in the operations in Cambodia, Mozambique and Angola is a clear example of our cooperation in this area. In the particular case of Angola, the activities of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) have yielded concrete results: nearly 6,000 kilometres of roads have been opened, certified or demined by United Nations troops.

Uruguay has participated in the establishment and functioning of the Central Mine Action Office and the Mine Clearance Training School. Recently, a Uruguayan teacher at the School, Captain Fernando Poladura, was gravely wounded in the course of his duties. To date, there have been three Uruguayan casualties in mine-explosion accidents.

Uruguay was among the sponsors of General Assembly resolutions 50/70 and 50/82, on the suspension of the export of anti-personnel lane-mines and on assistance in mine clearing respectively. Here too we acknowledge the efforts to achieve consensus proposals.

My country has repeatedly spoken out against the traffic, stockpiling, export and manufacture of these weapons. That is why we were particularly interested in ideas that have been put forward by a number of delegations, which made it possible to hold today's debate.

I highlight the German seven-point proposal for the elimination of the use of anti-personnel mines and the proposal on the immediate world-wide entry into force of the revised Protocol on land-mines adopted at Vienna in May this year. We hail measures leading to unilateral indefinite moratoriums on the export of anti-personnel mines of all kinds.

There is no doubt that Germany's concern that the Security Council should propose that demining be included in the mandates of United Nations peace-keeping operations is an excellent initiative.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kamal (Pakistan): My delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the high office of President. I would also like to convey our profound appreciation to the German delegation for providing us an opportunity to address an extremely important aspect of United Nations peace-keeping operations. As one of the largest troop-contributing countries to United Nations peace-keeping operations, and the largest today, Pakistan has consistently contributed to demining activities in such operations.

The problems posed by the indiscriminate laying of the alarming number of over 110 million land-mines in more than 60 countries across various regions of the world are of grave concern. Since the current rate of mine laying far exceeds the rate of mine clearance, the problem simply continues to get worse. More than 800 people, mostly innocent civilians, are killed every month by land-mines. The number of victims who are maimed and mutilated is even higher. Land-mines have thus become a problem which has achieved the dimensions of a world-wide plague.

The magnitude and complexity of the international land-mine problem, in the context of United Nations peace-keeping operations in particular, is immense. The deployment of peace-keepers in a mine-strewn country is replete with grave threats to their safety and security. These perils seriously undermine their performance. Along with the civilian population, the peace-keepers also fall victims to randomly scattered mines. The severity of the hazards is further substantiated by the fact that land-mines are the second leading cause of operational deaths of United Nations troops serving in certain parts of the former Yugoslavia. Similarly, in Angola, the United Nations military observers are not able to effectively monitor cease-fire agreements because their mobility has been restricted by the threat of undiscovered mines.

Unfortunately, Pakistani peace-keepers have also suffered as a consequence of the indiscriminate use of land-mines. Just last June, one of our site supervisors serving with the United Nations Angola Verification Mission was seriously injured while undertaking a demining operation.

United Nations peace-keeping forces carry out demining for two primary purposes: first, to ensure a secure environment to engage in peace-keeping, and secondly, to carry out other parts of their mandates. For example, in Cambodia the United Nations peace-keeping mandate included the conduct of elections, so polling sites were demined. In Angola, part of the United Nations peace-keeping mandate is to restore the free

movement of people and to create an indigenous demining capacity.

While these two objectives are of primary concern, would it not be prudent to plan mine clearance beyond peace-keeping operations, while staying within the context? As we all know, the removal of land-mines is one of the prerequisites for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of a country. Demining operations could be designed to rid the civilian populations of mine-infested countries from this menace.

Therefore, the linkage between a peace-keeping operation and a humanitarian programme is of critical importance. That is why it could be advantageous for future peace-keeping operations to continue to include resources for the early establishment of an integrated demining programme. In order to ensure a coordinated approach to the land-mine problem, it is also important to link the peace-keeping mine-clearance activities closely to the humanitarian activities from the very beginning. This would also ensure the continuance of mine-related activities following the expiry of a peace-keeping mandate.

We are cognizant of the fact that mine clearance operations are slow, painstaking, expensive and dangerous. The Secretary-General has also acknowledged that the start-up costs of mine-clearance are often very high because a demining programme may need to create almost all of its own infrastructure. Yet the human cost of not destroying these mines is proving to be even higher. Thousands of lives are lost to explosions; entire regions are denied basic services because repairs to an infrastructure are impeded; humanitarian aid shipments are disrupted; and organized societies are thrown into chaos.

The international community should make grants and contributions in order to provide adequate financing for demining activities undertaken in various operations. The demining standby capacity of the United Nations should also be strengthened by placing trained personnel, equipment, modern technology and other facilities at the disposal of the United Nations.

Pakistan believes that the sharing of the costs of demining must be based on the principle that those who lay land-mines must bear the primary responsibility for their clearance. Parties that have wreaked havoc by indiscriminately deploying mines must not be allowed to walk away from the scene of the carnage. In the context of peace-keeping operations, wherever the abusers can be identified, they should be made to pay for the devastating suffering that they have caused.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that while Pakistan will continue its consistent policy of actively participating in all efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations in preserving international peace and security, the safety of our troops is a matter of priority. Pakistan therefore urges the international community to contribute to strengthening the demining capability of United Nations, particularly in peace-keeping operations.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Bohayevsky (Ukraine): We have every reason to thank you for convening this open meeting of the Security Council devoted to the problems of demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping. We believe that the consideration of this issue is a very timely and important step, since the problem of land-mines long ago transcended humanitarian considerations and, as indicated by recent developments in the hot spots of our globe, has figured prominently whenever United Nations peace-keeping operations are conducted. Increasingly, land-mines pose a serious problem for United Nations peace-keeping activities.

The implications of the use of land-mines affect all aspects of the implementation of the Organization's mandate. Uncleared land-mines significantly complicate and slow down the process of the deployment of United Nations peace-keeping troops and make the conditions of their devoted service extremely dangerous. In the final analysis, all these factors undermine the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations efforts aimed at the prevention and settlement of conflicts. It should also be noted that the use of land-mines, apart from being very detrimental to peace-keeping missions, has a negative impact in terms of future participation of individual countries in United Nations peace-keeping activities.

The use of land-mines in areas of conflict and their negative effect on the security of both civilians and United Nations peace-keepers are a cause of special concern to Ukraine.

The figures speak for themselves. During the years of conflict in the former Yugoslavia alone, land-mine explosions have claimed the lives of 20 United Nations peace-keepers and more than 200 people have been

injured to various degrees. Besides, millions of refugees and displaced persons are potential victims of this danger.

That is why it is our deep conviction that the time has come to drastically change our approach to this very complicated problem.

The Ukrainian delegation believes that the problem of demining should become an integral element of the planning and implementation of any peace-keeping operation. The questions of timing, stages and conditions of engagement of the demining capacity are yet to be answered. There is no doubt that demining activities in a country can be justified and effective only if parties to the conflict are reliably prevented from acquiring land-mines. Ideally, these measures should be most actively undertaken when an armed conflict has ended and its causes are dealt with through political means.

At the same time, lessons learned during the recent peace-keeping missions in heavily mined areas, such as Angola and the former Yugoslavia, prove that conducting mine detection and clearance activities in areas of operation before the actual deployment of peace-keepers is becoming an important prerequisite for the full-scale deployment of a mission, because peace-keeping forces can effectively implement their mandate only in areas known to be free of land-mines. That is why it is appropriate to consider further the question of sending forward-line demining units to the field before the full-scale deployment of an operation.

In our opinion, it is worthwhile to use more often the practices of dispatching the joint missions of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO) to the areas of conflict. They could be entrusted with the tasks of assessing the scope of the land-mine problem in each country and accordingly developing the most effective programmes of assistance in the demining of the territories.

Careful consideration should also be accorded to the issue of establishing mine-clearance centres in countries where an armed conflict has ended, but where land-mines continue seriously to undermine efforts aimed at achieving long-lasting peace and stability. At the stage of post-conflict peace-building, such centres could function as valuable training institutions, strengthening the national capacity in the demining process.

Welcoming the idea of establishing a lessons-learned unit within DPKO, we are looking forward to receiving relevant information containing a thorough analysis of the experience gained during United Nations demining operations.

It is also very important to address the problem of improving the existing techniques of demining. At a time when in some regions of the world the great number of mines silently awaiting their prey exceeds the number of residents, the mobilization of scientific and material resources to create state-of-the-art demining technologies appears to be an extremely urgent problem.

Our delegation's participation in the discussion of this item is far from accidental. Ukraine strongly supports the measures aimed at eliminating the threat associated with land-mines. It is for this reason that our State declared a self-imposed four-year moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines of all types, effective 1 September 1995. Moreover, we remain convinced that the declaration by all States of a comprehensive moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines could significantly contribute to solving all the problems related to the use of these dangerous devices.

Irrefutable is the fact that the destructive impact of land-mines is much greater than their short-term military benefits.

Ukraine also attaches great importance to international cooperation in mine clearance. The Ukrainian bridging company participates in the peace-keeping operation in Angola, where an extremely serious situation prevails because of a large number of land-mines. Therefore, our troops, apart from fulfilling their direct duties, have to conduct mine-clearance operations. Moreover, being a part of the United Nations peace-keeping forces, engineer troops from Ukraine are also engaged in demining activities in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. At the same time, Ukraine has a mine-clearance training centre that provides all the facilities necessary to train foreign specialists in this field.

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that Ukraine is prepared to provide, on specific terms, special units of its military forces for demining operations conducted under the auspices of the United Nations and of other international organizations, as well as on a bilateral basis.

But, obviously, all these efforts by Ukraine alone are not enough. The scope of the global problem of uncleared land-mines is so enormous and its humanitarian consequences so devastating that it is only through the concerted efforts of the concerned Member States, working in close cooperation with each other, that significant progress will be made on this issue and these seeds of death will finally be destroyed.

I wish all of us success in this noble endeavour. The faster we act the more innocent lives will be saved.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Australia. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Millar (Australia): Australia welcomes the opportunity this debate provides to Member States to present their views on this very important issue.

The Security Council pronounced itself on the general problem of land-mines in a statement responding to the supplement of February 1995 to the Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace. In its statement the Council supported efforts to curb the spread of anti-personnel mines and to deal with land-mines already laid, and expressly welcomed General Assembly resolutions on both aspects of the problem.

The Council also reaffirmed its deep concern over the tremendous humanitarian problem caused by the presence of mines and other unexploded devices, and emphasized the need for increased mine- clearance efforts by the countries concerned and with the assistance of the international community.

Australia takes a close interest in land-mine issues, and we have worked closely with the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations on demining and rehabilitation. Our activities include mine clearance, training and mine-awareness programmes, assistance to mine victims and the provision of prosthetics. An integral element of these programmes is the transfer of knowledge and capacity to local people so they are able to minimize the risk to civilians, especially children.

Our assistance to these programs increased from $1.8 million in the financial year 1993-1994 to nearly $5.8 million in 1995-1996. Much of this contribution has been directed towards Cambodia, as the most mine-affected country in our region. But we have also assisted substantially the programmes coordinated by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in other badly mine-affected countries: Mozambique, Angola and Afghanistan.

Not to neglect a problem which is equally serious from a humanitarian point of view, we are contributing $700,000 over three years to the United Nations trust fund for clearance of unexploded ordnance in Laos, a long-standing cause of great suffering and an obstacle to development in that country.

In view of the dimensions of the land-mine problem, we welcome the ideas being put forward in this discussion today on the subject of mine clearance and United Nations peace-keeping.

At this stage, our own thinking on this subject is of a general nature. But it is clear that peace-keeping mission planning should include consideration of the need for mine-clearance activities. Planners need to address the question of whether mine clearance is operationally necessary to carry out the mandated functions of the mission, including the protection of peace-keeping forces and ensuring freedom of movement. It may be that there is a need for greater specificity regarding mine clearance in peace-keeping mandates. We wish to reflect on the views of other Member States on that question.

Experience suggests that a truly comprehensive political settlement should address in detail the elements of peace-building, of which demining is an essential part.

It follows that the Council should take the opportunity, in resolutions or statements related to a peace-keeping operation, to explicitly address the subject of humanitarian mine clearance. But whether it is to be regarded as an aspect of peace-keeping is a matter that needs further consideration, including in the light of financial implications.

At present, our judgement is that the Department of Peace-Keeping Operations and Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) are coordinating well in their respective involvement in mine clearance, both at Headquarters and on the ground, but we note some Member States are of the view that there is a need for greater clarity of their roles.

As a general proposition, the transition from a peace-keeping mine-clearance programme to a humanitarian programme needs to be carefully managed

and well coordinated, including in consultation with non-United Nations actors.

As Member States are aware, demining strictly for immediate peace-keeping needs can in many respects be of a different nature from long-term humanitarian mine clearance. For affected people on the ground, the emphasis on demining to provide a safe working environment for peace-keepers can be seen as a failure by the United Nations to address urgent humanitarian problems. Accordingly, it is Australia's view that humanitarian demining programmes, including the creation of indigenous demining capability, should be run concurrently with demining for peace-keeping.

The Council therefore needs to coordinate its efforts with other organs of the United Nations so that DHA can begin concurrent planning for humanitarian demining.

Financing for humanitarian purposes is obtained largely through voluntary trust funds. Inevitably, the shortage of such funds during the early phases of a mission works to prevent the concurrent operation of peace-keeping mine clearance and humanitarian mine clearance.

Adequate financing for humanitarian mine clearance is a concern of all United Nations Members. One thing the United Nations could do, through the Economic and Social Council and the Fifth Committee, is develop a position on the long-term budgetary situation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. For example, could more of its core activities, including those related to mine-clearance programmes, be funded out of the regular budget?

We believe it is false economy to invest our efforts in mine clearance in the absence of a clear international commitment to prevention. Australia is concerned that the international community has still not developed a serious humanitarian approach in international negotiations on this subject to date.

In its recent resolution extending the mandate of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III), the Council, addressing its message both to the Government of Angola and to UNITA, stressed the need for destruction of land-mines as part of a continued commitment to peace. The United Nations should continue to give attention to the disarmament aspect of the land-mines problem in general.

On 15 April this year, Australia announced its support for a global ban on the use, transfer, production and stockpiling of anti-personnel mines, and the suspension of the operational use of anti-personnel mines by the Australian Defence Force. We will determinedly pursue the objective of a global anti-personnel land-mine ban in a number of forums: in the General Assembly, in the Disarmament Commission, in the Conference on Disarmament and at future meetings of the parties to the inhumane-weapons Convention. We are looking forward to a meeting of pro-ban States to be hosted by Canada in October, which is expected to identify strategies for achieving such a ban.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Croatia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): At the outset we should like to congratulate the German delegation, which, in recognizing the urgency and concern the international community has attached to this serious problem, has presented us with some highly expedient proposals and expeditiously convened this meeting. The fact that we have gathered here today demonstrates that we share a high measure of awareness of the problem, as well as a definite political will to find solutions.

We believe that although much progress has been made in the field of land-mine awareness, when recalling the many meetings and conferences that have preceded this meeting, much remains to be done. Experts have identified mine-clearance problems, and mine-clearance operations in various countries have enabled us to accumulate a great amount of knowledge, which has in turn been used to outline possible solutions. More extensive prohibitions and restrictions on land-mines have been agreed to, and some countries have gone a step further by banning anti-personnel mines from their weapons arsenals. These are all steps in the right direction which, we believe, will eventually enable us to achieve the common objective of eradicating this weapon completely.

Unfortunately, this does not take away from the fact that 85 to 110 million anti-personnel and other mines lie uncleared in many countries around the world. As the Council may be aware, the Republic of Croatia is directly affected by this problem. According to current estimates, approximately 3 million land-mines were laid on 13,000 square kilometres of Croatia's territory, or 2,300 mines for every square kilometre. This land-mine problem is exacerbated by the mine-like risks of more than 100,000

unexploded artillery shells and ordnance scattered over the same area.

For Croatia the eradication of land-mines is not only desirable — it is absolutely necessary. According to rough estimates based on recent experience, it will take 2,000 men directly engaged in mine clearing from eight to ten years to completely demine this territory. Until that time, and to quote the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance at Geneva on 6 July 1995:

> "Where villages are mined, refugees and displaced persons cannot return home; where agricultural fields are mined, farmers cannot plant and harvest crops; and where power lines, highways and irrigation systems are mined, development cannot move forward."

While Croatia is working towards returning its refugees and displaced persons to their former places of residence, it will be some time before these people regain their normal way of life. We should like to point out that demining should become an integral part of the post-conflict restoration process and, therefore, inseparably linked to peace-keeping operations, be they United Nations operations or not. Taking into account the fact that demining is very important not only for the safety of peace-keeping troops and returning civilians, but also in restoring the fabric of a war-shattered economy, the overall success or failure of a peace-keeping operation can hang in the balance if significant progress is not made in demining during that time. Peace-keeping operations cannot facilitate the return of refugees and the displaced and the nominal functioning of civil order, as well as facilitate the distribution of aid, if territories are not demined.

Croatia welcomes the efforts of the United Nations and the Secretary-General in establishing international mine-clearance centres where necessary. In this regard, Croatia is now in the process of discussing the establishment of a mine action centre in Zagreb.

Through the mine action centre, Croatia hopes to share not only its experiences and successes but also its shortcomings with regard to the mine-clearing process. In this way we believe that others will gain by implementing for themselves, in their national environment, measures that have proved successful and efficient in Croatia, while at the same time avoiding the shortfalls. To this end Croatia is prepared to work with other national mine-clearance programmes so as to improve reciprocity with regard to education and training. We believe that any aid, be it financial or technical, which can expedite the mine-clearing process will be well met.

Furthermore, we should like to propose that the United Nations, acting through its current and former peace-keeping operations, become the global coordinating centre for demining activities. In this way, a United Nations coordinating body for demining could facilitate the exchange of data on the various types of mines used, together with the best and most efficient way of approaching the defusing of those mines; the exchange of technical personnel responsible for demining; and the exchange of equipment and other materials that have proved necessary for demining.

The demining process in any country is long and arduous, and it becomes more laborious and dangerous if the right technology, equipment, education and training are not present. In this regard, the leading military Powers should also consider making available to less developed countries, by loan if necessary, sophisticated equipment that will make the demining process more efficient and comprehensive. Norway's mine-clearance programme, announced at this meeting, sets the right example and should be highly commended.

Taking all these factors into consideration, Croatia extends its full support to the initiative calling for a comprehensive international ban on anti-personnel mines. As a first step in this direction, we are pleased to note that Croatia has acceded to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons and is prepared to sign the revised mine Protocol included therein.

As the international community is developing its understanding of the land-mine problem, anti-personnel mines are becoming a matter of priority for Governments as well as for inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations. Let us hope that the pooling of resources and common will will allow us to complete our much-desired objective.

Allow me once again to express my thanks to you, Mr. President, for your efforts in convening this meeting and my sincere wishes for its success.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Colombia. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Vargas de Losada (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In his report on agenda item 70 of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, contained in document A/50/701 of 3 November 1995, the Secretary-General states that

> "Land-mines are in reality a weapon of mass destruction, in slow motion, because they indiscriminately kill or maim massive numbers of human beings over a long period of time." (*A/50/701, para. 5*)

There could be no more appropriate or poignant a definition.

Land-mines not only cause mutilation and death during and after conflicts, but have devastating effects on entire nations, impeding the work of economic reconstruction and normalization. Mines do not recognize peace agreements or cease-fires, continuing to wage a perpetual war against everything and everyone.

More than 110 million land-mines are scattered throughout 64 countries, almost all of them developing countries. Between 2 million and 5 million additional mines are laid every year. In addition, between 100 million and 150 million are stockpiled. Given the fact that in recent years there has been a large increase in internal conflicts, the problem of mines has acquired a new dimension, and their indiscriminate effects affect more and more people. More than 65 million mines were laid during internal conflicts in the past two decades.

According to reports of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), more than 800 people die every month as a result mines, most of them civilians — farmers, women and children — and thousands more are wounded or maimed. Mine clearance is therefore imperative, and it calls for a huge effort in overcoming great economic, social and technical difficulties.

Each mine yields a profit of between $3 and $15 to the seller and costs the country affected between $300 and $1,000 to remove it. At this rate, clearance of the 110 million mines already laid would cost between $33 billion and $110 billion. This does not take into account the irreparable losses in terms of human life and mutilation, or the huge costs of medical treatment, prostheses and rehabilitation. It is estimated that today more than 250,000 disabled or maimed people require prostheses.

The real magnitude of the problem is shown by the fact that, if land-mine proliferation were halted in 1996, at current rates of funding and clearance it would take more than 10 centuries to eliminate all mines from the face of the Earth.

I should like to refer briefly to the report of 6 September 1995 on assistance in mine clearance, presented by the Secretary-General in document A/50/408, in particular chapter V, entitled "Actions for a political solution". That document reiterates that

> "during the past year, approximately 100,000 land-mines were removed, while between 2 and 5 million mines were newly laid. These figures emphasize that this is not a static problem, but a humanitarian crisis that is growing rapidly. They also indicate that mine clearance alone, even at the increased rate that it is hoped to achieve, will not solve the problem. Equally important are increased and concerted political efforts to stop the further proliferation of land-mines." (*A/50/408, para. 100*)

It is clear that it will be impossible to resolve this global problem of land-mines unless this proliferation is stopped. The best and most effective way of carrying out this mission is the complete ban on the production, use and transfer of all land-mines. While we wait for this ban to come into force, time is running out, tragically, for all of us.

In the meantime, we welcome all measures designed to slow the proliferation of land-mines. On the domestic front, every State, in exercising its sovereignty, is doing whatever it can with its limited resources and the technology that it can afford. However, in view of the magnitude and nature of the problem, effective international cooperation is urgently required. In this context, I should like to say that Colombia has been cooperating on demining projects in Central America within the framework of the Organization of American States.

We believe that the establishment of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance is a positive step forward. The international community awaits an increase in generous contributions to this Fund from those who in the past have profited from trade in mines and who, at the very least, have a moral responsibility in this regard.

Our Organization must play an effective and active role to help the States affected and must coordinate efforts with regional organizations that are already doing similar work. However, first and foremost it must, clearly and forcefully, promote the basic solution: a complete ban on the production, use and transfer of all land-mines.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Hungary. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Náthon (Hungary): My delegation has aligned itself with the European Union statement on demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping and shares its conclusions. Let me, however, make some remarks on this topic on behalf of the delegation of Hungary.

As was pointed out by several previous speakers, the elimination of anti-personnel mines has become an enormous global problem in recent years. My delegation shares the concern that despite numerous and constant efforts made by the international community, the extensive use of anti-personnel mines, with its devastating human and social consequences, is still playing a significant role jeopardizing the solution of many long-lasting regional conflicts. The tremendous accumulation of anti-personnel mines has remained an urgent problem, in fact a challenge, that requires a further strong and coordinated international response.

Anti-personnel mines are especially dangerous in the sense that these weapons do not discriminate between soldiers and civilians, and virtually anyone can become a victim. The facts are very sad: it is estimated that there are more than 100 million uncleared land-mines on a vast territory ranging from Angola to Bosnia, threatening the lives of thousands of civilians, including many innocent children.

United Nations personnel on duty are not immune against mines either. Troop-contributing countries are very well aware of the potential danger their soldiers, policemen, civilian observers and other officials face when on various missions in regions of conflict. Every year, some 20,000 peoples are killed or maimed by land-mines. Last year, a Hungarian military observer suffered serious injuries in Georgia.

I believe, therefore, that the time has come to reinforce our efforts to seek a global, political and legal solution to eliminate or at least decrease the danger represented by anti-personnel mines.

The irresponsible and indiscriminate deployment of anti-personnel mines can even have the negative effect of slowing down, even blocking, the efforts of the international community to implement the mandate of peace-keeping missions, as we have seen, for instance, in the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia. With a limited capability for action, peace-keepers might easily find themselves in situations where even preserving the achievements of previous peace efforts proved to be impossible, and where the conflict might even be escalated.

We cannot fail to mention in this regard the responsibility of the parties involved in a conflict, especially in cases when anti-personnel mines are used as offensive weapons. It is not acceptable to my country that anti-personnel land-mines are used during the implementation of peace-keeping operations, when, instead of seeking peaceful solutions, the aim of belligerents is to provoke further hostilities.

But it is not only that. In times of post-conflict rehabilitation, land-mines can obstruct the delivery of relief supplies, the repatriation of the local population, and so forth. The rebuilding of the infrastructure or the implementation of economic recovery operations can also be delayed. Countries that have suffered through war must suffer further because of land-mines, which continue to impede the process of national reconstruction.

We believe, therefore, that to expedite post-conflict mine clearance activities, much more attention should be paid to ways of encouraging local involvement and management in mine clearance operations.

While recognizing that it is the primary responsibility of the States directly affected to carry out the bulk of mine-clearing activities, we are also convinced that the United Nations has its own special function in strengthening the international legal framework and in assisting Member States to implement their mine clearance programmes.

As regards the legal aspects of the land-mine problem, Hungary welcomes the agreement reached in Geneva last May, during the third phase of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. It was certainly a promising step in the right direction. It will further reinforce existing prohibitions and restrictions

on the use and transfer of those categories and types of anti-personnel land-mines which present the greatest danger to civilians.

In the view of my Government, the adoption of an international ban on anti-personnel mines would surely better serve the cause of relieving mankind of this weapon. In this context, a recent initiative presented by Mr. Klaus Kinkel, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, seems to us to be of particular value.

The United Nations has also undertaken considerable efforts to reinforce the means at the disposal of the international community. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peace- keeping Operations should be highlighted as focal points of this activity within the Secretariat.

The United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance has also increased United Nations mine-clearance capacity through coordination activities in the field and in the implementation of the mandate of certain peace-keeping operations. At the same time, one cannot hide a certain degree of concern over the Fund's obviously insufficient financial resources. Clearly, a solid, long-lasting solution should be found to finance this most important activity.

Given the close interrelationship between peace-keeping operations and the issue of demining, which I tried to outline earlier in my contribution, one such solution might be to integrate demining activities in the overall mandate of peace-keeping operations.

To conclude, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, for the timely idea of discussing the issue on the Council's agenda. I am convinced that discussions of this kind are of great importance both for the Council and for Member States in general.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Takht-Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Security Council is meeting today to discuss demining in the context of peace-keeping operations, a subject of paramount importance to the success of certain United Nations peace-keeping operations.

The issue of land-mines, with their lethal nature and collateral effects, has focused the attention of the world community and caused it serious concern over the past several years. The world is shocked by the monumental number of mines which infest various countries in conflict and post-conflict phases, as well as by the horrendous consequences of their indiscriminate use.

This issue defies the human intellect and demands comprehensive yet prompt solutions. For its part, and as an affected State, the Islamic Republic of Iran has actively participated in the work of competent bodies dealing with land-mines and in principle has supported any genuine initiative aimed at the prohibition of all types of land-mines without exception.

My country appreciates the depth and magnitude of the many problems associated with mine clearance in post-conflict cases. During the Iran-Iraq war, nearly 16 million land-mines and other unexploded devices were laid in Iranian territory temporarily occupied in different stages of the war, covering more than 4 million hectares. Over the past six years, we have embarked upon a massive mine clearance operation in order to enable civilians displaced by the war to return to their homes and resume normal life. We have succeeded in neutralizing more than one third of all mines and other unexploded devices laid in our country.

However, lack of access to maps of minefields and to advanced equipment and technology have not only slowed down our efforts, but also have caused unacceptable casualties both among those involved in mine clearance operations and, more regrettably, among innocent civilians.

It is indeed ironic that despite a world-wide campaign against anti-personnel land-mines in recent years, no serious attempt has been made to transfer newer mine-clearance technologies to mine-afflicted countries. Various types of equipment continue to be subject to discriminatory and unjustifiable export control regimes.

We recognize a special role for the United Nations in this regard. The United Nations needs to ensure that no restrictions are applied by any State that would hinder or otherwise impede, in any manner, access to mine clearance technology. At the same time, all States, particularly those which have the required technology and equipment for mine clearance, should declare to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs the kind of assistance, both financial and technical, that they can provide to mine-infested countries and relevant United

Nations programmes. It is indispensable for any serious United Nations programme to facilitate the access of mine-stricken nations to the machinery and technology necessary for speedy and effective mine clearance.

We are also conscious of the serious threat that mines and other unexploded devices pose to the safety, health and lives of personnel participating in humanitarian, peace-keeping and rehabilitation programmes and operations. In this regard, we note with satisfaction the inclusion in the mandates of several peace-keeping operations of provisions relating to mine clearance work carried out under the direction of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations in the context of such operations. The Security Council might consider, when necessary, including mine clearance as part of the functions of United Nations peace-keeping operations in future.

Such mine-clearance work is admittedly of a narrow scope. Experience and history reveal that the problems posed by mines remain long after the peace-keeping operations are concluded. Hence, it is crucial that the General Assembly continue to develop operational policies and activities designed to clear mines in affected countries in the post-conflict period to pave the way for bringing normalcy to life and for development. It is in this context that due attention should be paid to the distinct nature of the demining activities performed by different United Nations departments, programmes and bodies. Moreover, mine clearance activities, whether in the context of peace-keeping operations or outside of their purview, should be consistent with the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of full respect for the sovereignty, sovereign equality and territorial integrity of all States, and of non-interference in their internal affairs.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Singh (India): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on this initiative to hold this open meeting of the Security Council on an issue of concern to all troop-contributing countries.

All of us today seem to be in agreement that the land-mine crisis is a tragedy of mammoth proportions. As several other speakers have pointed out, conservative estimates indicate that there are 110 million land-mines littered in five continents, claiming 500 victims a week. The expanding dimensions of the crisis are graphically evident from the fact that while the international community is able to clear about 100,000 mines annually, 2 million to 5 million new mines are laid during the same period.

Land-mines are, of course, a legacy of conflicts and wars, but their impact lingers on long after the guns have been silenced. Not only do land-mines maim about 20,000 people and kill 10,000 civilians annually, but they have been seen to have a devastating and serious negative effect on socio-economic development. They have disrupted social services, made agriculture risky, crippled essential infrastructure, prevented people from returning home, and intensified the problems of hunger and poverty. The physical, psychological, social and economic consequences of land-mines all therefore need to be addressed by any mine clearance or demining programme.

Viewed from this perspective, demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping operations represents one limited facet of the campaign against the indiscriminate use of land-mines. As the Secretary-General noted in his report to the fiftieth session of the General Assembly (A/50/408), peace-keeping forces have engaged in demining for two purposes: first, to provide for a secure environment to engage in peace-keeping and, secondly, when demining is necessary to carry out other parts of their mandates.

Indian troops involved in United Nations-mandated peace-keeping operations have been associated with demining activities since the Congo operations of 1961 to 1963. More recently, in operations in Cambodia and Somalia, Indian peace-keeping contingents have included specialists in demining who have been involved in mine breaching and tactical mine clearance. In Cambodia, Indian experts helped in the training of civilians and worked closely with non-governmental organizations in developing a data base, undertaking area fencing and sensitizing the local population. In the largest current United Nations peace-keeping operation, in Angola, the Indian engineering contingent has been involved in the opening of the main arteries so as to facilitate the movement of the peace-keepers.

Indian infantry battalions involved in peace-keeping operations include demining experts as integral elements. This is in keeping with India's long-standing commitment to support United Nations demining efforts. It is also in the spirit of that commitment that India made a voluntary contribution of $50,000 in kind to United Nations demining operations, in the form of a broad range of

services to be rendered by Indian experts. These would include establishing mine control centres and fielding mine survey teams, mine clearance supervisory teams and advisory teams, which will be fully equipped.

Demining is a hazardous business. In the service of the international community, Indian troops have suffered casualties, as have troops from other countries. However, given the fact that in some peace-keeping operations the "Blue Helmets" represent the only available organized group with the capacity to undertake demining, they are saddled with these tasks as intrinsic to their broader goals.

None the less, while defining the parameters of demining in peace-keeping operations it also needs to be remembered that mine clearance by the military is by its very nature constrained, on various counts. These include, for example, the fact that the availability of time is limited, as demining is a means to achieve other goals rather than a goal in itself; secondly, the requirements for the acceptability of a military demining operation do not include the identification of all mines and their destruction, but the task is more in the nature of mine breaching; thirdly, the limitations proposed by the financial implications of major involvement of the military in demining activities in United Nations peace-keeping operations in an era of financial stringency and mounting United Nations debt to major troop contributors; fourthly, the probability of duplication of the efforts of specialized agencies which are already addressing the problem in a multifaceted manner as part of a long-term development activity to improve the living conditions of people and bring about rehabilitation, whereas peace-keeping operations by the very nature of their mandate are of a finite, limited duration and can hardly be expected to take a long-term view; fifthly, the inherent limitations and difficulties referred to by the Secretary-General in his report (A/50/408) regarding transfer of capacities based on a primarily military culture to civilian and national control; and finally, the needs of major initiatives in the realm of demining by the United Nations need not always coalesce with the requirements of mounting a peace-keeping operation.

In effect, demining is not conducive to a merely military solution; nor can it be restricted to peace-keeping operations. In fact, one of the first United Nations demining initiatives was launched in 1989 in Afghanistan, where no peace-keeping mandate existed. Demining activities in Cambodia and Mozambique have continued to be a major focus of United Nations involvement, long after the peace-keeping operations in those Member States had ended.

The impact of land-mines on the economic and social activities of an affected area makes demining, as the Secretary-General has stated, an integral part of the post-conflict peace-building of a nation. To be successful and sustainable, demining operations need to address the totality of the problem in an integrated manner, and address all dimensions simultaneously. They therefore need to be viewed in the light of economic and social development activities to rehabilitate and improve living conditions of people in countries debilitated by the scourge of land-mines.

It bears to re-emphasizing in this context that there are intrinsic and structural differences between peace-keeping operations and peace-building activities. A continuum is no doubt possible in some instances. However, in so far as the United Nations system is concerned, the responsibility for post-conflict peace-building activities has necessarily to pass to the General Assembly, given its overall mandate and responsibilities under the Charter.

Tackling the land-mine problem, while on one level requiring the pooling of our resources to launch demining in a comprehensive manner, also requires, on other levels, the strengthening of the norms against land-mines through specific steps such as the prohibition of transfers and the prohibition of use in internal conflicts. Such collective and broad-ranging steps will cumulatively make it feasible to move towards our shared goal of confronting the challenges of this massive problem.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation welcomes your initiative, Sir, in convening this formal meeting of the Council to discuss the issue of demining in the context of United Nations peace-keeping. My delegation considers this meeting to be a very important and timely one, given the alarming proliferation of land-mines around the world and their continued use by some of the world's armed forces. We are by now familiar with the statistics that have been quoted in this Chamber pertaining to land-mines, and in the interest of saving time I shall not repeat them here. Suffice it to say that these weapons kill or maim more than an estimated 20,000 people a year, primarily civilians, a high

proportion of whom are innocent children and women who risk their lives playing or eking out a living on land strewn with anti-personnel mines. In countries of recent conflict, millions of these terrible weapons lie buried, waiting for some unsuspecting victims to trigger them.

Alarming as these statistics are, they do not tell the entire tragic story. They do not tell us in graphic detail of the horrendous injuries and deaths mines inflict on their victims or of the tremendous social and economic costs they exact of these countries, most of which have already been impoverished by long years of conflict. In many of these countries the toll in terms of human deaths and injuries is enormous, indeed incalculable, and continues long after the conflicts have ended. Vast tracts of otherwise arable land lie fallow and uncultivated on account of these mines, even when, in many cases, there is a severe shortage of land for food production to feed the teeming millions. This pathetic situation has plunged many of the affected countries into even greater depths of poverty and dependence on foreign aid. The situation is made worse by the exorbitant cost of mine clearance, which imposes a heavy drain on the national treasuries of the countries concerned. With such vast numbers of these cruel and indiscriminate weapons strewn around the world, which by some estimates might take more than 1,000 years to be completely cleared, there should be a serious rethinking of existing military doctrines that legitimize the use of these land-mines.

In addressing this problem, Malaysia joins others in calling for serious efforts to resolve the mines crisis which, in our view, is a catastrophe of global proportions requiring concerted and coordinated action by the entire international community. We would urge increased global awareness of the pernicious problems created by these devastating weapons so as to ensure that there will be no conspiracy of silence about the use and debilitating effects of these weapons.

As a country which is becoming more involved in global peace-keeping operations, Malaysia is naturally concerned about the safety of its peace-keepers. We have always believed that if the peace-keeping troops of the United Nations are to carry out their tasks effectively they must be adequately armed to defend themselves. They must also be adequately protected and kept out of harm's way as much as possible, and not be unnecessarily exposed to the risk of being blown up by these land-mines. It is important, therefore, that United Nations peace-keeping operations should include mine-clearing exercises as an integral part of such operations. In this regard we commend the measures already taken by the United Nations following the adoption of consensus resolutions by the General Assembly since its forty-eighth session. Such measures as the inclusion of mine clearance work in the mandates of several peace-keeping operations and increased coordination between the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in the context of such operations should significantly contribute to increased security for United Nations peace-keeping forces. We would welcome even more effective implementation of these measures in current and future peace-keeping operations.

However, Malaysia's concerns go beyond those of a peace-keeping troop-contributing country. As a member of the international community, we empathize with the plight of those affected by land-mines — such as our close neighbour Cambodia, which is seriously afflicted by this tragedy — and wish to contribute towards ameliorating their hardships and to work together with the rest of the international community in finding an early solution to the problem.

We can draw some encouragement from the fact that the international community is being sensitized to this problem, resulting in a surge of interest on the part of both Governments and the general public towards finding practical measures to bring the scourge of land-mines to an end. It is also gratifying to note that the issue had been addressed by the Review Conference of the States Paries to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, held in Geneva earlier this year, resulting in a revision of the Protocol pertaining to land-mines. Malaysia welcomes the adoption of the revised Protocol as a significant contribution towards improving existing laws pertaining to land-mines. However, welcome as they are, these constitute only half-measures which fall short of the ultimate goal of the complete elimination of land-mines. Malaysia is of the view that only a total ban on anti-personnel mines will put an end to the tragic consequences of the laying of land-mines and therefore expresses strong support for efforts to impose a global ban on these inhumane weapons. Pending such an outcome, which we hope will materialize in the not-too-distant future, Malaysia would put the onus on mine-producing countries to ensure a more stringent regime governing the production and transfer of these weapons. In this regard, we should seriously consider the possibility of including such transfers in a future, expanded, United Nations Register

of Conventional Arms in the interest of encouraging greater transparency in military matters.

In commending you, Mr. President, on your initiative in bringing this important issue to the Council for formal discussion, my delegation welcomes the seven-point action programme recently announced by His Excellency Mr. Klaus Kinkel, Foreign Minister of Germany. We consider the action programme an important contribution towards alleviating the effects of this global tragedy. We also welcome the initiative of the United States on this issue, as well as the positive roles played by other countries and international organizations — such as Canada, Japan and the International Committee of the Red Cross — in addressing this global problem. Malaysia wishes to associate itself strongly with these efforts and will work closely with the rest of the international community in the search for a lasting solution to the problem which, in our view, can only come about through an effective global ban on these weapons.

Clearly, in this exercise the role of the major powers is pivotal. They should manifest clear leadership and seriousness in pushing the process forward. They should lead by example and demonstrate clear commitment to phase these weapons out of their arsenals. It is our hope, however, that this phasing-out process will involve not just low-tech land-mines, but also high-tech land-mines, culminating in a final ban on all land-mines in order to insure non-selectivity in the treatment of this subject.

The President: In accordance with the decision taken earlier in the meeting, I now invite the representative of the Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*interpretation from French*): The Permanent Observer of Switzerland would like to thank the President of the Security Council for taking the initiative for this meeting, one which enables States which so desire to express in this prestigious Chamber their determination to combat the scourge of land-mines.

At the end of the twentieth century, thousands of human lives continue to be threatened by these deadly devices that kill and maim innocent people, often long after conflicts have ended. This situation is intolerable and cannot be accepted as inevitable.

Only the unswerving political determination of States, allowing for the establishment of genuine international coordination in the area of mine clearance, will put an end to this situation. Aware of the crucial role the United Nations has played and is called on to play in this area, the Government of Switzerland would like here to pay tribute to the International Committee of the Red Cross, which as part of its humanitarian operations is faced every day with the ravages caused by mines.

In view of the scope of the threat posed by the uncontrolled spread of some 110 million mines in more than 60 countries, mine- clearing assistance must necessarily become a priority task for international cooperation, as part of both peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance. This priority must given form in the establishment of large-scale demining activities. Indeed, no economic or social recovery is possible in areas where mines kill and maim on a daily basis.

The responsibility of the United Nations within the framework of maintaining international peace and security makes it the natural body to ensure the coordination of such an endeavour. For that purpose the United Nations must have at its disposal a structure adopted to this task and obtain the financial resources enabling it to act wherever the situation requires and permits. It will be in a position to fulfil this mandate only when the international community decides to accord to mine-clearing assistance the urgent character and the global dimension that it has been lacking to date.

With this in view, the Swiss Government will step up its contribution to the international effort for assistance in mine clearance. It will increase its voluntary financial contributions for the various mine-clearance programmes, the programmes that raise awareness of the mine problem, and the programmes for rehabilitating victims that it already supports. It will continue to support the development of humanitarian demining technology. It will also seek to make competent staff available to the United Nations Department of Peace-keeping Operations. For now, the Swiss Government is pleased to announce a voluntary contribution of 1 million Swiss francs to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance.

Mine-clearance efforts may still be in vain if the rules of international law on the use of land-mines are not strengthened. Protocol II, relating to mines, to the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons has just been revised. Nevertheless, the improvements to the text are

not completely satisfactory. In the view of the Government of Switzerland, only a total ban on anti-personnel mines will allow us to vanquish this scourge.

In spite of the improvements of the revised version of Protocol II, the Swiss Government believes that the campaign for a total ban on anti-personnel mines must continue and must be intensified. It will therefore take part in any reasonable initiative along those lines, in accordance with the humanitarian objectives of its foreign policy.

It is not enough, however, to express the intention to put an end to the use of anti-personnel mines. States must be prepared to proceed to action. This was done by the Swiss Government in November 1995, when it unconditionally renounced the use, production, laying and transfer of these mines. The unilateral renunciation, announced internationally, will soon be incorporated into Swiss legislation. Moreover, Swiss authorities are convinced that only an international regime banning anti-personnel mines — a regime strengthened by concrete and periodic surveillance measures — will make it possible for anti-personnel mines to be effectively eliminated.

As a depository for the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the additional Protocols I and II to these instruments, Switzerland feels a special moral responsibility in the area of anti-personnel mines. Their use flouts basic principles of humanity and the requirements of public morality. A ban on anti-personnel mines must therefore become an essential component of international humanitarian law. The Swiss Government will do its utmost to see to it that this objective is achieved and its implementation guaranteed.

The President: The next speaker is Mr. Peter Küng, Head of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the United Nations, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kung: First, let me thank you, Mr. President, for having extended to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) this invitation to come and address the Council about a subject of great concern not only to all present here, but to millions of people throughout the world. That subject is the very serious problems caused by the widespread use of land-mines.

With 64 countries affected by land-mines and approximately 24,000 victims of such mines every year, there is no doubt that mine clearance is a priority for the world community. Although the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) does not itself undertake mine clearance, it is often called upon to give advice as to the priority areas to clear in order to enable humanitarian relief to reach those in need and in order to enable a war-torn country to begin its reconstruction. We also undertake a number of mine-awareness programmes. However, the fact that we are present in these areas also means that we are fully aware of the total insufficiency of these measures. The extreme difficulties involved in mine clearance, which make it a very time-consuming, dangerous and expensive task, cannot be overestimated. The ICRC has seen that even establishing the presence of minefields frequently depends on anecdotal indications by locals of where an animal or a person was blown up by one. Mines are also frequently found in areas very far removed from their original point of emplacement due to the effects of rain or soil movements. Not only does the presence of mines hamper our efforts to bring relief to victims of war, frequently entailing expensive airlifts of relief supplies rather than the use of roads, but also Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel have been killed and injured by mines on roads which were supposed to be safe.

The ICRC is convinced that major efforts must be made to clear the mines that have already been laid, a task which the Secretary-General has estimated will cost about $33 billion. However, although tens of millions of dollars are being spent each year on clearance, far more mines continue to be laid than can be removed.

The ICRC is convinced that mine-clearance, although essential, can never be seen as the solution to the problem, for it will not significantly improve the present situation as long as mines continue to be used. The ICRC has very rarely called for the ban of a specific weapon, and therefore only does so if it is sure that very weighty reasons require such a step.

First, our surgeons, who have had many years of experience in treating war wounds, have stressed that anti-personnel land-mines cause by far the worst injuries of all conventional weapons. They are very difficult to treat, require multiple operations and usually result in maiming or death. It is certainly arguable that the nature of the injury is excessively serious when compared with the military purpose of such mines. Secondly, statistics from our hospitals and orthopaedic centres show that the majority of victims are civilians, including thousands upon thousands of women and children. We have also consistently seen a dramatic rise in land-mine deaths and

injuries at the end of hostilities, when displaced persons try to return to their homes and rebuild their normal lives. There is no doubt in our minds of the inherently indiscriminate nature of this weapon.

Then there are the profound economic consequences provoked by these weapons: whole regions needed to support and feed large communities of people, often located in the poorest parts of the planet, are closed to agricultural, social and economic development. A severe deprivation of resources can last for decades since the cost and time required to demine these areas is truly phenomenal. Land-mines also severely hamper the universally accepted need to provide aid to the victims of conflict, for the suspected presence of mines hinders humanitarian operations, depriving whole communities of access to essential emergency relief.

The preponderant argument against a total ban is the military utility of anti-personnel land-mines, which is written into the military doctrine of most armies. As international humanitarian law is based on a balance between military and humanitarian needs, the ICRC has long had extensive contacts with the military in order to arrive at a balanced judgement on any issue. We therefore decided to commission a study by senior military officers, both retired and active, from a number of armed forces, to look specifically at the military use and effectiveness of such weapons. In studying some 26 post-Second World War conflicts, including all the international ones, this study found that mines could rarely be used, even by professional armies, in accordance with military doctrine and that their effect on the tactical situation was at best marginal. In many situations, their military effect was even counterproductive for the user. We would be pleased to provide a copy of this study to those of you who wish to have one.

We are also aware that obstacles to solving the land-mine crisis include existing and prospective commercial contracts, the huge bulk of land-mines already laid or stockpiled and their continued manufacture. Unless firm action is taken, the number of innocent victims will continue to grow and recovery of countries after war will be further hindered. This is being increasingly recognized by States: over 60 nations already support a global ban on anti-personnel land-mines. Multinational forums, such as the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States and the European Parliament, have also endorsed such a ban.

The ICRC participated in the conference that led to the amendment of Protocol II of the 1980 United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Although major efforts were certainly made to arrive at the best possible consensus, the ICRC fears that the amended Protocol will not significantly reduce the extent of the land-mine problem for reasons that were made known at the time by the ICRC, by a number of States themselves and by a large number of organizations. It is our view that anti-personnel mines must be banned and severe restrictions placed on anti-vehicle mines.

In early October, at a conference in Ottawa, Canada, representatives from many countries will meet to debate new forms of action and determine new ways of achieving the common goal of eliminating anti-personnel mines. For the ICRC this is a most welcome development, and we are convinced that such national and regional initiatives will pave the way for achieving a genuine consensus in favour of a ban. The alternative will be countless new victims, further destruction of economic and development potential and endless pouring of truly enormous amounts of money for demining, the end result of which will be more mines and not fewer. We sincerely hope that the world community will take the only humane and the only logical decision.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Argentina. I invite her to take a place at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Ramírez (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The Republic of Argentina is pleased that the Security Council has taken the initiative of considering the problems of demining in peace-keeping operations.

In the view of my delegation, this debate takes place in the framework of the various bilateral and multilateral initiatives taken by many States, including the Republic of Argentina, aimed at eradicating anti-personnel mines from the face of the Earth.

We consider very timely the Secretary-General's drawing attention to this issue in the "Supplement to An Agenda for Peace". We are aware that the Security Council, through its presidential statement of 22 February 1995, reiterated its profound concern at the terrible humanitarian problems caused by the presence of mines for the population of the countries in which they have been laid, stressing the need to step up removal activities with the assistance of the international community.

There are at present some 100 million active mines in the world, scattered throughout more than 60 countries, although some estimates give a considerably higher figure. Every month anti-personnel mines kill or wound about 60 people, 87 per cent of whom are non-combatants. Argentine personnel in peace-keeping operations have also suffered from the deadly effects of such mines. In 1993, Captain José Rojas lost his life in Croatia and Sergeant Sergio Valla was maimed when their vehicle ran over an anti-tank mine.

We must add to the humanitarian consequences of mines the fact that they also constitute a considerable obstacle to the economic development of the peoples, as vast expanses of land cannot be used for agricultural or industrial purposes. At the regional level, and with the aim of trying to eradicate the 1 million mines in Central America, Argentina has actively supported the Organization of American States demining programmes in Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica.

For all these reasons, and firmly convinced of the need to take specific action in this field, the Republic of Argentina, through decree 435 of 1995, adopted resolution 48/75 K, which had been adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 1993, suspending the exportation, sale or transfer of all types of anti-personnel mines, without exception, for five years.

The Republic of Argentina strongly and unambiguously maintains that the proliferation and the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines constitute problems whose very existence alone justifies that priority consideration be given to this item. In this context my country has carried out a series of actions designed to reverse this situation, in the framework both of the United Nations and of competent regional organizations.

Argentina is therefore a party to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. This Convention was signed by Argentina in 1981, and on 2 October 1995 my country deposited the relevant instrument of ratification.

The Republic of Argentina has taken part in the three sessions of the Review Conference of that Convention. It took part as an observer State in the first two sessions and as a State party in the third session. In that context, we hailed the adoption of the new Protocol IV of the Convention, relating to blinding laser weapons, and the amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices.

With regard to measures adopted by my Government in the United Nations context, the Republic of Argentina has offered qualified personnel to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs office of mine clearance policies and activities, for possible participation in each of the stages of the mine-clearance activities undertaken by the Organization. The Republic of Argentina views with satisfaction the response of the international community to this serious problem. The presence of 100 States and 60 organizations at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance, held in Geneva from 5 to 7 July 1995, shows the will of States to increase their political and financial support to halt the proliferation of this scourge. In this context, my country announced that its contribution for clearing mines from the Malvinas Islands should be treated as its contribution to the Voluntary Trust Fund established under General Assembly resolution 48/7.

We also took part in the international conference on mine clearance technology, which took place in Snekkersten, Denmark from 2 to 4 July 1996. That conference was organized with the support and cooperation of the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs. The Government of Argentina has traditionally co-sponsored every resolution dealing with this problem in the General Assembly.

I should like to emphasize that my country, which is committed to the objective of a ban on the use of anti-personnel mines, has since 1993 provided a group of engineers to the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) who are entrusted with the job of clearing the explosives and mines laid during the Gulf war. This unit of engineers has been carrying out its hazardous mission in the demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait. These operations are being conducted efficiently thanks to the cooperation of military observers and the inhabitants themselves, who very often report the presence of explosive devices. However, it has not been possible to avoid accidents or the loss of children's lives as a result of the explosion of military equipment.

The Government of Argentina is also considering the possibility of taking part in the demining programme conducted by the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination in Angola.

On the bilateral front, the Republic of Argentina has made an offer to the United Kingdom to take charge of the removal of mines planted in the Malvinas Islands during the 1982 conflict.

In recent years, the Security Council has become more aware of the specific problem represented by anti-personnel mines during and after armed conflicts. We believe that the mandates of peace-keeping operations should be more specific on this issue. We further believe that it would be useful for the Secretary-General's reports to be more explicit on the kinds of demining tasks that the United Nations, through its various agencies, is carrying out in the field. In this way coordination between such agencies and Member States would be improved.

We are convinced that this timely debate will contribute to greater awareness on the part of the international community of the scourge these mines represent and will allow for renewed cooperation in demining between our Organization and its Member States.

In conclusion, the Argentine delegation would like to say that it agrees with the delegations of New Zealand and Chile that it would be useful for the Security Council, through a presidential statement, to require a review of mine-clearance activities in peace-keeping operations.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Misić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): I guess it is not news to the members of the Security Council that up to 3 million land-mines litter my country today. Their effects on peace-keepers and other members of international organizations engaged in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and especially on our people — indeed, on the whole country — have been devastating and is ongoing.

From 1 January 1996 to 15 June 1996 alone, 16 persons were killed by land-mines, 8 of those being children. In the same period, 98 persons were seriously wounded, 34 of them children. So we see that even though the military conflict has stopped, the tools of military conflict continue to do their barbaric work of killing, maiming and crippling. And as has been said in this Chamber many times today, the overwhelming majority of land-mine victims have been, are and will continue to be children and civilians.

In only two Bosnian cities, Tuzla and Zenica, 55 per cent and 45 per cent, respectively, of all war-time amputees were maimed by mines. The cost of rehabilitation for these persons and all others maimed is tremendous and competes with resources for other purposes from the international donor community. But these are not the only reasons why we are so grateful to you, Mr. President, and to all members of the Security Council for putting the discussion on demining in the context of peace-keeping on the agenda at this formal meeting, thus giving us the opportunity to express our views on this issue.

At the outset, I have to say that we agree that the protection of peace-keepers deserves the special attention of the Security Council, which authorizes peace-keeping operations and bears responsibility for their participants. We hope that the Security Council recognizes in this context the absolute interdependence of the protection of the peace-keepers and the protection of the domestic civilian population. For, in a way, while on the ground, the peace-keepers become part of the local communities in the areas where they are deployed.

The successful detection, marking and clearing of mines and other unexploded ordnance protects both peace-keepers and the local population. Likewise, their existence, non-detection and non-lifting jeopardize both equally. Here the interests of both are absolutely inseparable. For this reason, if I, as a representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, focus my discussion on the issue of mines as a threat to the population and to aspects of the social life in my country, I kindly ask you not to interpret it as neglecting peace-keepers.

Mines, as everyone knows, do not only kill, maim and cripple. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, they are a blatant reminder of intolerance, ethnic chauvinism and the war aims which tore apart the fabric of Bosnian society, which today we are trying to stitch back together. In Bosnia today, land-mines have completed their military purpose. They are now doing what the perpetrators of division, "ethnic cleansing" and genocide tried to do: divide, separate and continue to breed fear and mistrust.

The mine problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina has, first, contributed to the lack of progress in the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes; secondly, helped to prevent freedom of movement in the country; thirdly, posed an obstacle to economic recovery; fourthly, kept a psychological burden of siege on the

Bosnian people so that they are unable to experience normal living, knowing that the threat of land-mines in most areas remains real; and, fifthly, contributed to increasing the burden of medical costs mandated by the treatment and rehabilitation of affected persons. But now we hope it is time for the comprehensive and intensified action in demining to begin re-establishing and laying the groundwork for strengthening peace and inspiring new reconciliation.

My Government thanks the Governments of all the countries actively involved in Bosnia and Herzegovina and all the organizations, including the Office of the High Representative, the World Bank, the European Union and the Implementation Force (IFOR) in their efforts at demining and in the establishment of the United Nations Mine Action Centre.

Unfortunately, the Mine Action Centre has been unable to do its duty quickly because of the chronic problem faced by my country today: the lack of pledged resources and the need for competing resources for countless other vital programmes needed to cement the peace in Bosnia. There are also serious technical issues which need to be worked out. My Government, first and foremost, supports and expects the demining project to be carried out primarily by Bosnian people and by Bosnian companies; they should be trained, equipped and supported in all other ways to do the job. Other alternatives can only be considered a temporary quick fix for a very large and time- consuming problem.

The reason for this is clear. I would like to put the mine problem in Bosnia into perspective. According to the Mine Action Centre, it would take 1,000 mine clearers 33 years to cover all the mine-contaminated areas in Bosnia and Croatia. In Bosnia and Herzegovina today, there are still 20,000 unmarked mine fields. We are under no illusions as to the time much of the international community is willing to invest in clearing Bosnia and Herzegovina of mines. Because it is our country and a long-term project, it should be handled by those with the greatest interests — the Bosnians themselves.

But the real threat of mines remains. All of this reinforces our strong support for the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons and for many General Assembly resolutions. We especially support the efforts of many Member States and international organizations for a total ban on the manufacture, transfer and use of anti-personnel mines.

But we also stress the importance of remembering that the issue is not only that of the manufacture, transfer and use of anti-personnel mines, but also the marking, removal and destruction of existing mines. This is why we join those who have called for much greater investment in financial, scientific and human resources in order to improve the technology for the detection and the destruction of mines, instead of increasing their destructive effects. In this context, I cannot resist expressing my deepest gratitude and appreciation for the Norwegian Government's decision to send to the territory of the former Yugoslavia a newly invented, highly efficient and safe mine-clearing device, as the Norwegian representative announced in his statement this afternoon.

Bosnia encourages the linkage of international humanitarian, financial and/or military assistance with the cooperation of needy countries, with the goals and desires of the many countries which have spoken today and with the Convention on Conventional Weapons. We also believe that those countries and Governments which are mine exporters and which violate United Nations resolutions, existing conventions and future decisions on mines should be discouraged from doing so with the threat of more serious consequences. In this regard, I fully share the view expressed here by the representative of Pakistan.

My Government not only has no reservations, but salutes and fully supports the latest initiative of the President of the United States of America to ban the usage, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel land-mines. We find the recently announced seven-point action programme on anti-personnel mines presented by the German Foreign Minister to be an extraordinary contribution to the decisive course towards the goal for which the majority of humanity strives: the elimination of the dangers and irreparable damages that mines cause both to peace-keepers and to civilians.

We cannot but express our gratitude for the material and other contributions that the United States of America, Germany, Japan, Canada and other countries have made towards the elimination of the dangers of mines, as well as for the assistance offered to my Government in detecting, marking and clearing mines, which are cowardly weapons that only reveal the most evil intentions of their users.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Panama. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Decerega Smith (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am grateful to you, Sir, for your initiative in convening this meeting of the Security Council.

The delegation of Panama sees today's debate as a good opportunity to express its support for including the question of anti-personnel land-mines in the consideration of peace-keeping, in both conceptual and operational terms. It is an urgent duty for us to consider and act upon the problem of land-mines. The ongoing threat on lands that are no longer a battlefield is that at any time land-mines can explode and claim men, women, children and the elderly as their victims: civilians one and all, who are defenceless and unaware of the threat to their lives. This threat poses a challenge to the human intellect: that of dealing with this senseless situation and eliminating the land-mines, whose existence in more than 65 countries is cause for shock — and the cause of pain and death. This situation, which is repugnant to human logic, must be eliminated.

Many in the United Nations, on many occasions, have denounced anti-personnel land-mines and have called for international cooperation for rapid, urgent, effective and complete demining. During today's debate in this Chamber, speakers have also stressed the relationship between the issue of anti-personnel land-mines, political disarmament issues, humanitarian issues, and development issues. That relationship has also been sharply underscored by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in "An Agenda for Peace" and in the Agenda for Development.

One historian of the Spanish colonization of the Americas relates that at one point the political and military authorities of the people indigenous to an area colonized by the Spaniards took the decision to make no more poisoned arrows. It was the view of that historian that the fields of battle against the colonizers and against enemy tribes were littered with poisoned arrow-heads, which posed a particular threat to the indigenes, who went barefoot. Whether or not one agrees with that interpretation, my delegation considers that the story illustrates many dimensions of the problem of the existence of so many millions of anti-personnel land-mines at the end of the twentieth century, despite the firm hope that we all share that the will for peace and cooperation for development can prevail in international relations.

Last May the revised Protocol II on land-mines was adopted as part of the 1981 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. The provisions of that Protocol and the restrictions it sets out are insufficient. My delegation wishes to put on record that the Government of Panama agrees with those who favour the total prohibition of the production, export and use of anti-personnel land-mines. The General Assembly of the Organization of American States, which met in Panama some three months ago, adopted a resolution supporting mine clearance in Central America; we hope that the General Assembly of the United Nations will echo that position at its forthcoming fifty-first session.

In May 1996, the European Union, through its then Chairman-in-Office, the delegation of Italy, expressed the conviction that

> "it is constant, broad and persistent efforts that are needed to achieve all the fundamental humanitarian goals".

My delegation sees in that statement a firm promise to carry out efforts of all kinds, including legal and financial efforts, and we hope that will be the case.

A few days ago we learned of the seven-point action programme on anti-personnel land-mines presented by Mr. Klaus Kinkel, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, on 18 June 1996. The seventh point of the German programme was by way of a supplementary invitation to today's Security Council meeting, to which Panama is happy to respond by means of the present statement.

We note important efforts on the part of a number of countries to engage in a task that should involve us all. At the risk of omissions, I want to thank the European Union, Canada, the United States of America, Japan, New Zealand, Pakistan, Australia, Uruguay, Colombia and Argentina. On behalf of the Government of Panama, I reaffirm our readiness to contribute our determination and resources to bring about the elimination of anti-personnel land-mines and to ensure that the complete eradication of these horrible tools of suffering is a goal we reach as soon as possible.

My delegation endorses the statement made by the representative of Nicaragua, who spoke on behalf of the countries of Central America.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to thank all speakers for the interesting and lively debate. We have heard quite a number of concrete ideas and proposals for improving demining efforts in the context of peace-keeping operations, some of which, I trust, stand a chance of being followed up and successfully implemented.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.3690

Security Council

Fifty-first Year

Provisional

3690th Meeting

Friday, 16 August 1996, 4.30 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Eitel	(Germany)
Members:	Botswana	Mr. Nkgowe
	Chile	Mr. Espinosa
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Ladsous
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Lopes Cabral
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Wisnumurti
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Gnehm

Agenda

Letter dated 9 January 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council concerning the extradition of the suspects wanted in the assassination attempt on the life of the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 26 June 1995 (S/1996/10)

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1054 (1996) (S/1996/541 and Add.1, 2 and 3)

96-86110 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 4.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 9 January 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council concerning the extradition of the suspects wanted in the assassination attempt on the life of the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 26 June 1995 (S/1996/10)

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1054 (1996) (S/1996/541 and Add.1, 2 and 3)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Sudan in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Erwa (Sudan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1054 (1996), documents S/1996 541 and Addenda 1, 2 and 3.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1996/664, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Botswana, Egypt and Guinea-Bissau.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following documents: S/1996/402, S/1996/464 and S/1996/513, which contain letters dated 31 May, 24 June and 2 July 1996, respectively, from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; and S/1996/538, letter dated 10 July 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The first speaker on my list is the representative of the Sudan, on whom I now call.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: Allow me to begin by offering heartfelt congratulations, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We have confidence in your wisdom and in your ability to lead the deliberations of the Council to positive and just results. We would also like to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Dejammet, the Permanent Representative of France, for the wisdom with which he conducted the deliberations of the Council last month.

Sudan's firm condemnation of terrorism has been expressed in all international forums, including in the United Nations and in the Security Council. Our condemnation stems from our firm principle of refraining from violence and following a path of peace and security.

I should like to reiterate my country's position for all who would like to open their hearts, to understand and to listen. The Sudanese Government and people forcefully condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, irrespective of the reasons or motivations of those responsible.

Sudan has not, and will not, allow its territory to be used for any act of terror or to be used as a shelter for terrorists or by those who have eluded justice. Sudan, like many other States, suffers day after day with those innocent civilians who lose their lives or who are harmed as a result of terrorist acts perpetrated in many parts of the world. Killing women and children, terrorizing peaceful citizens, destroying property and taking innocent civilians hostage cannot be accepted under any divine law; nor can they be accepted by any human being who believes in justice and peace.

My delegation reiterates its firm positions of principle, which have been repeated time and again and have not been heeded. We hope that this time the Council will listen and understand the seriousness and sincerity of our position.

Sudan renews its strong condemnation of the tragic terrorist attempt on the life of the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and firmly believes that those who participated in this terrorist crime must be brought to justice and punished. Sudan expressed its full readiness to cooperate with all parties to bring the suspects to justice, and took tangible steps in this respect even before the subject was brought before the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which discussed the question before it was brought to the Security Council.

Sudan sent a special presidential envoy to Ethiopia to communicate the results arrived at by the commission of inquiry established by the President of the Republic on the basis of the information provided by Ethiopia about the Egyptian suspects a month after the incident took place. But I would like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the fact that at that time Sudan gave Ethiopia the landing card received by one of the suspects upon landing at Khartoum airport immediately after the incident. Our dealings with Ethiopia were completely open. We wanted to cooperate in the search for and apprehension of the suspects. It is strange that that very same card was presented by our neighbour, Ethiopia, as proof of Sudan's involvement.

From the very beginning, Sudan approached the issue with good intentions and in a spirit of cooperation and confidence in our integrity and innocence.

I speak in full knowledge of the arrangements that were undertaken. The relevant authorities investigated this suspect who had entered Sudan, and they failed to find any trace of him there. We tried to trace him and find him, even before the adoption of resolution 1044 (1996), and we continue to do so. It has been proved beyond any doubt that the period that elapsed between his entry into Sudan and our receipt of the information from Ethiopia, when we started the search, provided him with the opportunity to flee the country.

According to the information provided by Ethiopia, he carries passports from many States, including Ethiopia, the country making the complaint, and Egypt, of which he is a national. It is well known that Sudan is a vast country with many points on its borders that cannot be controlled. But here I would like to mention in particular the fact that we continue to carry out our investigations into the route he took when he fled. Sudan is fully committed to providing any information it can in that respect.

This is the stage we have reached in trying to trace one of the suspects whom Sudan was asked to extradite under resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996). All members of the Council are aware of the press reports published about the other suspect, Mustafa Hamza. They also know about his interviews with reporters from his hiding place, which was outside the control of the Government of Afghanistan. Sudan drew the Council's attention to this fact before the adoption of resolution 1054 (1996). Sudan tried at the time to verify the information included in these reports by requesting the Council to establish an investigative committee to verify the information provided. When Sudan did not receive a positive response to the request, it tried unilaterally to verify the information and then intensified its contacts with the Afghan Government. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan confirmed the presence of the suspect inside Afghanistan, in an area outside the control of the Afghan Government.

We concur with the members of the Council who said that press reports cannot be considered hard evidence of the presence of the suspect in Afghan territory. However, the letter from the Afghan Foreign Minister confirming the press reports is before the Council today in document S/1996/513. Furthermore, many members of the Council have already verified the information and know that the suspects are not in Sudan.

What is asked of Sudan now? How can you give what you do not have? To request Sudan to extradite suspects it does not have is like asking it to try to square the circle, and is unjustified — unless the objective is to find an excuse to impose unjust sanctions.

Security Council resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996) refer to three suspects. The issue of the third suspect still raises many questions. What information about him is available in Sudan, Ethiopia or Egypt? His name is Izat or Yasim. There is no photograph of him. However, it is known that he is an Egyptian national, 34 years old, is married and lives in the Amarat quarter of Khartoum. That is the information that is available — it is the only information about him that Ethiopia has provided.

At the beginning, Sudan tried to verify the information provided about the character of the suspect, and the investigative commission tried to search the quarter where Ethiopia claimed he lived. However, we could find no trace of him and concluded that this person does not exist, but is merely a fictitious character,

unknown to us or to any of the other parties concerned with the matter.

I would like to refer to a comment that attracted our attention in a letter of 25 July 1995 from the President of Ethiopia, delivered to Sudan. This document claimed to include all the information about the suspects. Its annex 2 says of this fictitious suspect:

(*spoke in English*)

> "His full identity can be obtained from Mustafa Hamza and from Husayn Ahmed Shair'Ali".

(*spoke in Arabic*)

This sentence persuaded me to re-examine the press interview with Mustafa Hamza, and compare it with the comments in the Ethiopian letter. I found out that he stated that two, not three, people had participated in the assassination attempt in Addis Ababa and were able to leave the country. That confirmed our belief that this suspect did not exist. Some might say that we cannot depend on press releases by the suspect; that may be true. What is clear is that the information presented about the so-called third suspect is insufficient and unprofessional. No security or police force, regardless of how qualified, could trace a suspect on the basis of that information. Is Sudan required to chase mirages? That is my question.

Despite my comments about the suspects, and the fact that we made sure that they were not present in Sudan, we seriously and earnestly tried to trace them and obtain any additional information about them. In particular, we fully understand our responsibility towards the Sudanese people, who have been subjected to sanctions because of the extremely difficult demand made of Sudan to extradite the suspects for prosecution. Sudan spared no effort, employing all its technical and professional capability. It requested the assistance of Interpol in trying to locate the suspects and the participation of a security team from Ethiopia and Egypt in searching for the suspects. We got no answer. I admit that we have so far failed to find the suspects. This confirms our belief that they are not in Sudan.

Sudan shares the Council's view about the need to punish those who attempted to assassinate the Egyptian President. Sudan is committed to extraditing them if they are in its territory. It is also committed to cooperating with the Member States concerned, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations in this respect. We hope that this cooperative spirit will be reciprocated.

Sudan is also committed to turning over all available information, now and in the future, stemming from the ongoing investigations. However, Sudan cannot accept responsibility for the disappearance of the suspects or the failure to find them, especially since we are certain they are not in Sudan. Those who claim they are in Sudan must provide us with the information that will lead us to them.

The rationale for holding Sudan responsible for the presence of those people on its territory during a certain time period because they used Sudan as a transit point, or even because they resided in Sudan, can also be used to make each State through which they have passed or in which they have resided during different periods responsible at those times. In this sense, Ethiopia, where the crime took place and where the suspects remained for a considerable period of time, entering and leaving Ethiopia over a two-year period, as mentioned in the Ethiopian document, can be considered directly responsible. Why did Ethiopia not discover them at the time of their entries and departures? It is unacceptable to fail to provide adequate information that would help us find the suspects. Nor is it acceptable to use the pretext of protecting classified and delicate sources, because these sources are usually made available precisely at the critical moment when they are needed, and not afterwards. I really do not believe that punishing and depriving people should be so easy or that protecting sources and witnesses should be more important than human lives.

I do not wish to take up much of your time. However, the entire people of Sudan is being subjected to sanctions, and the embargo is a result of unfounded accusations from secret sources that cannot be revealed.

Here I would like to raise some questions. Why were those suspects brought to justice in secrecy? Why were Egyptian lawyers not permitted to see them? Why was Mr. Garekhan not able to meet them? Why were the Ambassadors of the permanent members of the Security Council not able to meet them? Why did the court proceedings stop? It is ridiculous. It is astounding that some parties would depend on information provided in a press conference with those suspects, who are protected by law. However, they could not be brought to a court where they could say what they wanted to say.

Security Council resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996) call on Sudan to desist from supporting terrorism and terrorists and from providing them with shelter. Thus was a grave accusation levelled against Sudan and used as a pretext to punish it, despite the fact that no one has given any firm evidence of actual occurrences. However, Sudan took the matter seriously and with great interest and it discussed the pretext that prompted this accusation. Sudan is a country known throughout history for having avoided any path that might lead to violence or terror and a country that has always advocated peace and love.

The Sudanese Government seriously sought to enter into contacts with the countries that levelled these accusations because we in Sudan understand the reasons that led some States to do so. We took immediate actions after our dialogue and contacts and undertook specific security measures, in accordance with their advice. We expelled from Sudan all foreigners that aroused these States' concerns, especially those called the Arab Afghans, whether or not they had engaged in hostile activities.

Some might ask why these people are in Sudan, and this is a legitimate question. Here I would like to clarify a very important fact. The presence of many Arabs and Africans in Sudan is a result of the policy adopted by the Sudanese Government six years ago. We do not require an entry visa for some Arabs and some nationals of African States. We in Sudan would like to encourage interaction with our Arab and African brothers and to encourage investment in our country. Such a policy is followed by many States, including States of the European Union. This policy was not invented by Sudan. It is a well-known practice in the international community. As a result of this policy, many nationals of Arab and African States have entered Sudan, and with an increase in their numbers and in the absence of any record of their presence, because they have never applied for entry visas, some States started expressing concern with regard to some individuals or groups.

The first reaction by the Government of Sudan, following the attempt on the life of the Egyptian President and the accusations levelled by certain Egyptians residing in Sudan, was to reintroduce the visa system. We were then able to create a record of all foreigners residing in Sudan.

Pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996), Sudan requested all foreigners to leave the country. Here I would like to clarify a very important point. Sudan did not receive accusations from any State against any of those expelled from Sudan. None of those expelled is anyone who should be brought to justice in this or any other country. All foreigners were expelled as a result of a decision taken by Sudan because we wish to be outside the circle of suspicion and to comply with the Security Council resolutions. We also wish to spare our people any suffering and to be fully dedicated to our economic development, in cooperation with friendly and brotherly countries.

Holding Sudan solely responsible for all terrorist acts that occur in neighbouring countries, in our region and in the entire world will not solve the problem of international terrorism. The solution to this disaster facing humanity today lies in trying to tackle the real causes of the problem and then in addressing them, one after the other. Making unfounded accusations against States — simply condemning them under the pretext of fighting terrorism — is not a solution to the problem.

I would like to mention that Sudan shares with the Security Council members and the international community the desire to fight terrorism and wishes to express its sincere willingness to cooperate with any State to reach this objective. The victims of terrorism are our brothers, our fathers, our mothers and our children.

I want to reiterate that the steps taken by Sudan were not a diversionary tactic, as some sought to make them appear. They were genuine measures that yielded tangible, well known results. They have become the policy of the Sudanese Government, and these security measures can be verified, because Sudan is open to anyone who wishes to investigate and confirm the situation.

In its two earlier resolutions, the Security Council called upon Sudan to improve its relations with its neighbours. I shall not discuss the details of those resolutions or the circumstances of their adoption; I shall merely say that Sudan has 10 neighbour States, and has extremely good, friendly relations with six of them, to which we are committed through various agreements and joint ministerial committees that meet regularly.

What are the facts about our relations with the other four States? Let us begin with Ethiopia, the country which submitted the original complaint. Relations between Sudan and Ethiopia had been very good, and were gradually developing, apart from a few border problems that were resolved through understandings reached between the parties. Relations continued to be

friendly even after the tragic attempt on the life of the President of Egypt. Owing to its gravity, that incident caused a misunderstanding between the two countries, which will come to an end as soon as the problem is resolved. That is why Sudan has been eager to continue its contacts with Ethiopia to try to settle the problem and move forward. Our efforts culminated in a meeting between the Presidents of Ethiopia and of Sudan at the African summit held at Yaounde, at which they discussed matters of interest to both countries. They both reaffirmed their intention to cooperate to prevent relations from deteriorating. We see this as a first step, and want to reiterate our determination to continue on this path. We are confident that our neighbour Ethiopia shares that determination.

Our second neighbour is Uganda, with regard to which we inevitably harbour some resentment. It is very well known that Uganda has supported the insurgency movement in southern Sudan. From the start of that movement in 1984, it has provided financial and moral support to the insurgents, enabling them to attack Sudan from Ugandan territory. That support has continued since the current Government came to power. Sudan has constantly sought a rapprochement between our two countries. Even when our efforts seemed to yield success, this was only temporary, for Uganda would soon return to its customary practices. Sudan has tried to improve its relations with Uganda, and has undertaken initiatives with respect to third-State mediation: Malawi and, earlier, Libya and Austria have engaged in mediation efforts. But whenever a date was set for a meeting between officials of our two countries, Uganda would fail to appear and make excuses to avoid the meeting. Ugandan troops have tried to support the insurgency by entering Sudanese territory, but these Ugandan attempts have been doomed to failure. Sudan has always hoped that a solution to the situation could be found on a bilateral basis, and that Uganda would respond to one of the mediation efforts. We have hoped too that the situation could be resolved in an African context. That is why we have never brought the Ugandan aggression before the Security Council and have not spoken of the Ugandan invasion.

But we now despair of a response by Uganda, especially since Uganda has accused Sudan of supporting Christian fundamentalists within its southern border, even though it knows perfectly well that the border area is not under Government control, but is controlled by the insurgents supported by Uganda itself.

I think that members of the Council are well aware of the many problems between Uganda and all its other neighbours without exception. Some of these have come before the Security Council. Hence, I think that members know which party is attempting to destabilize the region.

Sudan continues to try to pursue the mediation efforts to which I referred earlier. I thank the many States that have undertaken endeavours in that connection, and today I urge them to continue to try to convince Uganda to accept negotiations and consultations to settle all disputes between our two countries. I reiterate that Sudan is serious, and is ready to sit down at the negotiating table with its neighbour to the South, Uganda, with a view to normalizing relations.

I turn next to Eritrea. Eritrea is a poison dagger; it is truly a wound festering on our eastern borders; it poses dangers that threaten to spread throughout the Horn of Africa.

Eritrea is the only State in the world whose President declares, in public and before the international mass media, that it will provide armed assistance to any opposition groups aiming to topple the legitimate Government of Sudan. Speaking about this support, he said to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

(spoke in English)

"I would say the sky is the limit."

(spoke in Arabic)

Yes, that is what the Eritrean President himself said to the BBC. I leave it to you, Mr. President, and to the other members of this Council, to assess this statement by the Eritrean President.

In addition, there were intrusions into Sudanese territory and the laying of mines inside residential areas, which killed many Sudanese citizens. This prompted Sudan to draw the attention of the Council to such practices. Here we can refer to Security Council documents S/1995/569, S/1995/522, S/1994/133 and S/1994/71.

While some try to blame the Sudanese side, let us look at Eritrean relations with its neighbours. Those relations were the subject of daily editorials in the international press. Even yesterday there were reports of attacks and military hostilities, and the Council and

international courts were made aware of it. The efforts made by some members of the Council for Eritrea to improve its relations and settle its disputes with some of its neighbours are known to everyone.

I would simply ask if Eritrea's conduct and its aggressive attitude towards the Sudanese people and its Government — its legitimately elected Government — are Sudan's responsibility. Sudan and the Sudanese people have hosted and shared with the Eritrean people for years, due to the frivolous policies of the Eritrean Government; — will they now be punished? Will they have to suffer the harsh and repeated Eritrean acts of aggression, and then have to bear the blame?

The members of the Council will remember what we said in document S/1996/358 about the Eritrean act of military aggression on Sudanese territory and the opening of the Sudanese embassy in Asmara to the armed Sudanese opposition in a step that had no precedent in international law or in civilized behaviour. Nevertheless, I would like to recall that Sudan did not initiate hostilities against Eritrea. It stands ready to eliminate the tension between the two countries if Eritrea shows its good intentions towards Sudan, and if it desists forthwith from providing outlaws with armed support, from destabilizing Sudan and from terrorizing Sudanese citizens in the eastern part of our country.

Let us turn once more to a country that is our sister and our neighbour, Egypt. We would like to state, as we have done in the past, that the time-honoured relationships between our two peoples and our two countries are very special. This is a relationship that goes far back in history. It is as old as the Giza pyramids near Cairo and the Birawia pyramids in the northern part of Sudan. It is as old as the Nile valley, through which flows our life-giving blood. It is very difficult for people outside Egypt or Sudan to understand the depth and the complexity of this relationship that has always been limited — at its best and at its worst — to the two parties.

Perhaps it was destiny that led us today to this landmark moment in the relationship between our two countries, a moment when the very special nature of our relationship is brought before international and even regional forums. This fills us with bitterness. However, we want to comply with the Security Council's resolutions, which obligate us to discuss our relationship with our sisterly neighbour through the Security Council.

Major efforts were made between the officials of our two countries; they were crowned with success at the summit meeting between President Hosni Mubarak and President Omer Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir in Cairo. No observer could describe the meeting as anything but a success. Proof of this success is that it was followed by a series of meetings between the two countries' Foreign Ministers, their Ministers of the Interior and their Ministers of Information. It was agreed to establish security committees to solve the security problems between the two countries.

The first meeting of these committees was held on 3 July 1996 in Khartoum. It was a general preliminary meeting devoted to discussing the problems of the two parties with a view to reconvening within a week. Our security delegation in Sudan has been ready for the convening of the second meeting since 10 July 1996. We are still attempting to contact the Egyptian leadership regarding the holding of this meeting.

I would like here to speak with the transparency required in this Council. We heard our Egyptian brothers accuse us of procrastination and a lack of seriousness. I would like to ask how a short preliminary meeting intended to discuss a general framework and procedural matters and to decide upon the details to be discussed can be said to lack seriousness or be an occasion for precrastination? How could our relations have deteriorated to a point where such a judgement could be made?

I would not like to speculate that the real intention was simply to waste precious time so that the matter would be brought to the attention of this Council in order that more pressure would be brought to bear on Sudan.

I would like to confirm here that in our view these steps represented a very good and encouraging beginning, especially if we take into consideration the fact that these meetings were considered the first of their kind between the leaders of the two countries in six years.

That is why it may not be easy to hasten the results and to expect an immediate resolution to all pending questions between the two countries. Arriving at a solution to such questions with sisterly Egypt is one of the first strategic priorities of the Sudanese Government. Sudan is very serious in its approach. Sudan is fully committed to the framework laid down by the Presidents of our two countries to bring about a *rapprochement* and to solve all pending problems between us. The Sudanese

Government has genuine and honest intentions that it would like to translate into tangible joint endeavours in order to improve our relationship.

Ultimately, Sudan would have hoped that sisterly Egypt would not be a force behind attempts to impose sanctions on the Sudanese people, a people that has always had sincere concern for the problems and worries of the Egyptian people. Sudan has always been a natural extension of Egypt, as Egypt has been of Sudan. Allow me to quote a line of Arabic poetry that describes the situation between us and the Egyptian people: the injustice of kinsmen is more painful than the blow of a sword.

These are the efforts that we in Sudan made, in all honesty, in an effort to comply with the Security Council resolutions. Despite the many concerns and objections we voiced at the time, Sudan has been fully committed from day one to the implementation of all the resolutions. Sudan's continued efforts are not made with regard solely for our neighbouring countries, but for all countries of the world, and especially for the major Powers. Our efforts genuinely express our respect for international legitimacy and for the basic principles of peaceful coexistence between countries and peoples.

All we are asking of the international community in general, and from the Security Council in particular, is fairness and justice. We ask that the whole question be viewed objectively in the light of the steps already taken by Sudan. No one can really deny that these steps were taken; Sudan knows that all members of the Council, without exception, admitted that Sudan had taken some positive steps. What was the result? Did the Council encourage Sudan to proceed with these steps by lifting some of the sanctions, or at least give us the chance, to take further positive steps? Or did it warn of further sanctions which, if applied, would have adverse humanitarian and economic effects, not only on Sudan, but on the Horn of Africa region in general?

The draft resolution before the Council today follows the path of the imposition of sanctions. Members of the Security Council and of the United Nations in general are well aware of the destructive results of these sanctions and of their repercussions on people. The view of the international community on the imposition of sanctions was reflected in the consensus arrived at by the Subgroup on sanctions within the framework of the Open-ended Working Group on An Agenda for Peace, which confirmed, among other things, the need to avoid the adverse long- and short-term effects inflicted upon people as a result of sanctions. Sudan holds the Security Council and its members responsible in the eyes of history for the draft resolution they are about to adopt. Logic would indicate that the Sudan's cooperation and serious attempts to comply with the Council resolutions should be met with encouragement by the Council, not by a warning that further sanctions will be imposed on a suppressed and weak people. The measure that the Council intends to take today, although some believe it was simply a means to delay discussion of the subject with a view to granting Sudan more time, is an attempt to prejudge Sudan. The victims will be the peaceful Sudanese people and the region as a whole.

Allow me to pose a legitimate question. Is the international community keen on punishing people by imposing sanctions, or is it using this means to maintain international peace and security and to solve problems? We are faced with a situation in which positive steps are being taken: things are moving forward, not backward. Imposing sanctions in this case reaffirms that the intention is to punish people. Here, I would like to say that the way in which the Council has discussed this subject will be a very bad example for other States seeking justice from the international community, particularly since all Sudan wanted was justice and nothing more. For many States, what Sudan has come to face in the Security Council is simply injustice in its worst form.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the principles that Sudan has set forth are truth, justice, consultation and peace. That is why the accusations levelled against Sudan run counter, in principle, to the premises on which we base our policies and practices. Sudan will for ever remain true to these principles, in conformity with our heritage and our history as a Member State that effectively participates in the maintenance of international peace and security. As such, Sudan will spare no effort and leave no stone unturned to consecrate these principles and to continue to comply with all the resolutions of the Security Council, because we are fully committed to international legitimacy.

The President: I take it that the representative of Sudan was not aware of the Council's new practice of forgoing compliments addressed to the President and to his predecessor. All the same, I want to thank him for the kind words addressed to my predecessor and to myself.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): Despite everything that has just been said by the representative of Sudan, to which I listened carefully, my delegation is unfortunately not persuaded that Sudan has yet complied with the Council's demands in resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996). Sudan has not extradited the three suspects wanted in connection with the assassination attempt on President Mubarak, and many of Sudan's neighbours remain concerned about its support for terrorist activities within their territories.

That is why the Council has to take further action. It has nothing to do with the orientation of the current Government in Sudan: it is purely and simply a necessary response to Sudan's failure to respond adequately to the demands of this Council and of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

We therefore welcome the initiative of Egypt in bringing forward the draft resolution on which we are about to vote. We fully support the measures it contains, and we hope that they will contribute to an early change of heart in Khartoum.

The solution to the problem is simple: the Government of Sudan must recognize international concern about its behaviour and comply with the demands of the Security Council and the OAU.

One of the principal demands of this draft resolution and the previous resolutions is the requirement for Sudan to ensure that the three suspects wanted in connection with the assassination attempt on President Mubarak are brought to justice in Ethiopia. We remain convinced that the Government of Sudan knows where they are. If they are still in Sudan, the answer is straightforward: the Government must extradite them to Ethiopia under the terms of the bilateral extradition treaty. If, as may be the case, Sudan has helped at least one of the three to leave the country, this draft resolution clearly requires that the Government of Sudan must take immediate action, including, for example, by providing the necessary evidence, to bring about extradition to Ethiopia. We will not be satisfied until Sudan has secured this objective, and has also ceased to support international terrorism.

We have noted with interest the moves Sudan has made to distance itself from some of the terrorist groups it has supported, and we have noted the claims made by the Government of Sudan that it has demonstrated its readiness to cooperate with all parties concerned in seeking and apprehending the suspects. But we consider that it still needs to do more to comply with the demands of Security Council resolution 1044 (1996).

By adopting this draft resolution the Security Council will show the Government of Sudan that it remains engaged in this matter, and that it will not hesitate to implement air sanctions after a period of 90 days if Sudanese compliance is not forthcoming.

Finally, we urge those States that have not yet reported to the Secretary-General on the steps they have taken to implement resolution 1054 (1996) to do so. Rigorous enforcement of sanctions is an important factor in ensuring Sudanese compliance.

Mr. Gnehm (United States of America): The international community has demanded two simple steps of Sudan: the surrender of the three remaining suspects responsible for plotting the terrorist attack on Egyptian President Mubarak and, secondly, the end of its support for terrorism.

The Government of Sudan so far has refused to comply with these straightforward requirements. The Secretary-General's latest report makes that fact quite plain.

What we have witnessed instead, and what we have heard today, is a phony Sudanese public relations campaign to try to convince the world that Sudan has cooperated in the security field. As adoption of this draft resolution will make clear, the international community is neither confused nor distracted by such tactical ploys. Instead, it is prepared to apply measured, incremental pressure on the Government of Sudan until it meets fully its obligations. The Council will act today in a manner which carefully avoids aggravating the humanitarian crisis in the Sudan. We will ensure that if Sudan forces us to implement sanctions on its airline, humanitarian relief will continue.

This draft resolution is what I might call a wake-up call to the Sudanese authorities. In 90 days we will meet to decide the entry into force of the sanctions agreed to today and to set up their modalities. Because of the binding nature of today's decision, there can be no question of backtracking if the Sudanese remain obstinate. There must be no confusion on that point.

This grace period has one purpose: to give the Sudanese a chance to abandon their attempt to defy the will of the Security Council and the norms of international decency. There is one way, and one way only, for the Sudanese Government to avoid these sanctions: to take meaningful and convincing steps to cooperate in tracking down the three suspects and to bring an end to Sudanese support for terrorist groups.

International terrorism targets unprotected people, people who want only to live in privacy and peace. All Member States face its threat. World leaders have stressed their commitment to the battle against terrorism time and time again. Today we take a small step forward in that campaign. Our patient approach must not be misread in Khartoum. Our collective commitment to eradicating terrorism is unflagging. Continued Sudanese non-compliance with the demands of the international community not only will bring these measures into force, but will compel consideration of further steps.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian)*: Russia has always taken the position of resolutely resisting international terrorism in all its manifestations. In combating this extremely dangerous threat to world peace and security, we cooperate with various States in a concrete and constructive manner, as well as with international and regional organizations. Russia's contribution in preparing the anti-terrorist decisions of the Group of 8, adopted in Lyons and Paris, is clear proof of our consistent policy in this regard.

Russia decisively condemned the attempted assassination of the President of Egypt in Addis Ababa. We are making persistent efforts to see to it that an objective investigation into this crime, on the basis of facts, is carried out and that its perpetrators are brought to justice.

This job can be accomplished only through constructive cooperation between all interested parties, including within the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and other regional mechanisms, as well as at the bilateral level, with the involvement, if necessary, of competent international agencies. In particular, we are familiar with the pertinent proposals made by Interpol, but unfortunately, so far they have been left floating in the air. Important additional information might come to light also during the *in camera* trial going on in Addis Ababa, and we repeat our request for members of the Security Council to be informed about this trial.

We cannot fail to be concerned by the fact that when resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996) were adopted, the prevailing approach in the Security Council was aimed not so much at investigating those suspected of perpetrating a terrorist act as at isolating Sudan. In order to satisfy short-term interests, the voices were ignored of those — including my delegation — who strongly objected to the unsound practice of imposing sanctions on the basis of vague, and therefore hard-to-meet demands, without clearly formulated criteria and conditions for their imposition and lifting.

Unfortunately, a repetition of this approach can be seen in this draft resolution. It is true that this time the sponsors sensibly gave up the idea of an automatic imposition of a partial air embargo against Sudan; that was a step in the right direction. However, the draft resolution predetermines the inevitability of an air embargo. We are surprised that this was decided without an attempt being made to assess the negative humanitarian consequences of this measure for the population of Sudan, despite the fact that our delegation suggested that such a prior evaluation be conducted. Moreover, paragraph 3 of the draft resolution would impose sanctions not only on Sudan Airways but on all other Sudanese airlines, which have never been accused of anything.

The question arises of how Sudan should comply with the provisions of resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996), as, in several aspects, these provisions go beyond the limits of Sudan's national jurisdiction and real capacity.

The rash use of the sanctions instrument is not only destructive for the people of Sudan and the countries of the region, but creates a precedent which could do real damage to the Security Council's authority by giving the impression that the Council is not able to draw conclusions from past lessons. A paradoxical situation arises: on the one hand, during various informal consultations and in discussion in bodies of the General Assembly, broad support is given to the need to take into account and minimize the negative consequences of sanctions, *inter alia* for third countries, and the need to

establish clear criteria and time- limits; on the other hand, when it comes to taking specific decisions in concrete situations, the old approaches are followed.

In this light, the Russian delegation cannot support the draft resolution. However, we deem it possible not to stand in the way of its adoption. We trust that if, after three months, it falls to the Security Council to consider again the question of Sudan, common sense will prevail, and a commitment will be made to the goal of a realistic campaign against terrorism, not an attempt to use this slogan to punish regimes that some find unpalatable. We believe that such a discussion, if it takes place in three months' time, should be conducted only on the basis of an appropriate report of the Secretary-General, which should reflect both the possible humanitarian consequences of the measures being considered by the Security Council and an analysis of specific ways to resolve the issue, taking into account the proposals of Interpol and the progress made in Addis Ababa in the *in camera* trial.

We are convinced that the problem of bringing the suspects to justice must and can be urgently resolved. We hope that the Government of Sudan, in the spirit of its well-known proposals and promises, will, in cooperation with the authorities of Ethiopia, Egypt and other interested States, take real steps to attain that goal.

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): Let me begin by expressing the Indonesian delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report, contained in document S/1996/541 of 10 July 1996 and its addenda, concerning the implementation of Security Council resolution 1054 (1996). We consider that the report reflects a balanced and objective view, since it takes into account not only the measures taken by Member States but also the initiatives taken by the Sudanese Government in its efforts to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

We, like others, are deeply concerned by the assassination attempt against President Hosni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Addis Ababa in June 1995. Such an act of violence can only be decried in the strongest terms, and the perpetrators must be brought to justice. Indeed, the Indonesian delegation has always held a steadfast position against international terrorism, as that constitutes one of the most flagrant violations of human rights. In this regard, the Indonesian delegation wishes to reiterate its view that the Sudan bears the ultimate responsibility for fully complying with the provisions of Security Council resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996) by apprehending the perpetrators of this act of violence, as well as by refraining from providing support or shelter to terrorists on its territory. We are therefore encouraged to note that this aspect has already been incorporated into paragraph 1 of the draft resolution before us.

Notwithstanding this, the Indonesian delegation has believed, from the beginning, that a gradual approach to dealing with the matter would have been preferable, particularly in the light of the efforts made by the Sudan. As reflected in the letters of 31 May 1996 and 24 June 1996, the Sudanese Government has made efforts to find two of the three suspects and has also called upon Interpol for assistance. It has also stated its condemnation of terrorism and has taken the necessary steps to ensure that it is not perpetrated from its territory. Moreover, the Sudanese Government has made efforts to extradite many possible perpetrators of terrorism. These efforts follow the spirit of paragraph 1 (b) of resolution 1054 (1996). We also note that Sudan's letter of 2 July 1996 states that efforts are being made to enhance bilateral relations between Egypt and the Sudan as part of its intention to improve relations with its neighbouring countries.

However, on the assumption that the three suspects are no longer in the country, the Sudan would not be in a position to comply fully with the provisions of the relevant resolutions. Given the insufficient information available at this juncture, we believe that it would be more constructive for the Council to further encourage the Sudan to undertake efforts to provide information on the suspects, including their whereabouts, by allowing more time and avoiding overly harsh measures that in the end may prove to be counterproductive in their attempt to ensure the Sudan's cooperation with the international community. We therefore cannot but express our reservations regarding the imposition of wide-ranging sanctions against Sudan Airways, as reflected in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. Although the ban on Sudan Airways is primarily targeted at its international flights, we are none the less concerned that it would also have an impact on its domestic activities, particularly the transport of humanitarian needs, since these two aspects are closely interlinked.

While fully realizing that, under paragraphs 4 and 5 of the draft resolution, implementation of these measures and consideration of all the aspects of the modalities of implementation would not be determined by the Council until 90 days after the date of adoption of the draft resolution on the basis of the facts established by the Secretary-General, we feel that the timing of incorporating such measures in the draft is not

appropriate. Moreover, our understanding regarding these modalities would also include a fixed duration for the imposition of such sanctions.

The Indonesian delegation is concerned about the extent of the impact of sanctions on the Sudan, since it is one of the poorest countries in the world. Their imposition would have detrimental effects on the innocent civilian population and impact negatively on the economy. We would like to reiterate that, as a matter of principle, the imposition of sanctions as a means of bringing pressure to bear on Governments is a matter of utmost seriousness. Sanctions are not meant to be punitive. Therefore, the adverse humanitarian impact, in particular in the case of the Sudan, must not be so quickly dismissed.

In this regard, it is my view that in order for a resolution to achieve its desired effects and to become an effective tool to rectify a situation, it is imperative to address not only the concerns of the issue at hand, but also to maintain strict adherence to the basic principle of non-punitive sanctions. For it would be a meaningless exercise if resolutions were adopted which were not implementable, as this would only affect the Council's own credibility. If fundamental principles are not respected, however good intentions may be, a resolution may not adequately address the matter.

The draft resolution before us today essentially addresses the continued non-compliance by the Sudanese Government with the requests set out in paragraph 4 of resolution 1044 (1996) and reaffirmed in paragraph 1 of resolution 1054 (1996). Considering that the basic tenets remain that those responsible for the assassination attempt must be brought to justice and that the Sudan has the responsibility to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions, and in the light of the observations I have just expressed, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): More than seven months have passed since the Security Council first acted upon the issue at hand by adopting resolution 1044 (1996), calling upon the Government of Sudan, *inter alia*, to comply with the requests of the Organization of African Unity to extradite the three suspects wanted in connection with the assassination attempt on the life of President Mubarak of Egypt and to desist from supporting terrorist activities. Nearly four months ago the Council acted under Chapter VII of the Charter to reiterate its demands by adopting resolution 1054 (1996).

My delegation regrets the lack of progress in the implementation of paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution 1054 (1996). We believe that the Sudanese Government can and should meet the demands of the Security Council. When it comes to paragraph 1 (b) of resolution 1054 (1996), we note that some positive steps have been taken by the Government of Sudan. We welcome the Sudanese Government's condemnation of terrorism and its commitment to ensure that no terrorist activities are tolerated in Sudanese territory. We believe that Sudan's declared commitments should be backed up by further concrete actions.

We believe that the purpose of the draft resolution before us is to send a clear message to Sudan that there is no substitute for compliance with the Council's demands. It contains no forceful measures to be implemented immediately. However, the measures specified in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution to be adopted represent a clear warning of what could follow if, and only if, the Government of Sudan fails to comply with the demands reiterated in paragraph 1 within 90 days. The central merit of this phased approach is that Sudan's compliance within the next 90 days obviates altogether the need to actually implement paragraph 3. We appeal to Sudan to make the best use of the additional grace period allowed under the draft resolution to comply fully and promptly with the demands of the Security Council.

With these remarks, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China)*(interpretation from Chinese)*: During the deliberations on the present item in the Security Council, the Chinese delegation has reaffirmed on many occasions that it has consistently and resolutely been opposed to any form of terrorist activities.

In our view, all terrorists should be brought to justice. The attempt on the life of President Mubarak of Egypt constitutes a serious incident. All sides concerned should join in a common effort to apprehend the suspects for prosecution. Ever since the Council adopted Security Council resolution 1054 (1996), all sides concerned have made considerable efforts to implement its relevant provisions. In his report, the Secretary-General also pointed out that as a party directly concerned, the Sudan has on many occasions indicated in specific terms its opposition to terrorism and has taken some practical actions. In our view, the Council should continue to

encourage all sides to make greater efforts in order to settle the question as soon as possible.

China's position of principle on sanctions is a consistent one. We do not consider sanctions a panacea because sanctions, or the tightening of sanctions, cannot solve a problem; they may, on the contrary, further aggravate the problem. Restrictions on Sudan Airways constitute an escalation in the sanctions regime on the Sudan.

Although the draft resolution before us does not determine the date of entry into force of its provisions, it represents a clear decision on imposing such sanctions. This question concerning the Sudan is already quite complicated. We are concerned that tightening sanctions against the Sudan might further compound the problem. The Chinese delegation proposed some amendments to the draft resolution during consultations. These reasonable suggestions have regrettably not found acceptance. Therefore, we cannot but abstain in the vote on the draft resolution before us.

We believe that as long as the parties concerned pursue the path of dialogue and consultations in good faith and with seriousness of purpose, a satisfactory solution can ultimately be found to all problems. We earnestly hope that this will happen.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): The draft resolution before us was prepared and introduced by the three African countries sitting on the Security Council. The Italian delegation has great respect for the positions of the African members of the Council, and from the very beginning their Governments have worked on the case we are examining within the framework of the Organization of African Unity.

This draft resolution meets, in our opinion, the Security Council's purpose: to make known to the Government of Khartoum the further measures the Security Council is prepared to take. It is our hope that Sudan will be able to comply with the pertinent resolution, thereby avoiding a dangerous isolation of its country from the international community.

The letter sent by the Sudanese Government to the Secretary-General and the clear condemnation of terrorism and the commitment to cooperate in the investigation that we have just heard from the Permanent Representative of Sudan indicate that that Government is aware of the need to do something about the international community's perception of Sudan as a provider of support and shelter to international terrorist organizations.

However, the initiatives undertaken so far by the Government of Khartoum appear to fall short of full compliance with the demands of the Security Council, in particular, with the ones concerning the finding and extradition to Ethiopia of the suspects wanted in connection with the assassination attempt on the life of President Mubarak of Egypt, which took place in Addis Ababa on 26 June 1995.

My country's relations with this region of Africa are very old and, traditionally, intense. Italy therefore wishes that genuine peace may soon return to the region, and that is why we have always been at the forefront of providing and coordinating humanitarian assistance to the people of Sudan. At the same time, I think that we must reaffirm strongly that an end to acts of international terrorism is essential for the maintenance of international peace and security. That is the reason why Italy will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Nkgowe (Botswana): During the meeting at which resolution 1054 (1996) was adopted, on 26 April 1996, my delegation expressed the hope and the belief that the Government of the Sudan would comply fully with the demands of resolution 1044 (1996). We expressed confidence in the ability of the Sudan to avoid an escalation of the situation by facilitating the handover of the three suspects to Ethiopia for prosecution.

Let me reiterate once again that, as an African country, Botswana harbours no ill feelings or intentions towards the brotherly people of the Sudan. Reason, however, dictates that the suspects who made an attempt on the life of President Mubarak of Egypt must be brought to justice in accordance with the demands of resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996). We trust that this time our brothers in the Sudan will fully comply with those resolutions and thus avoid a situation in which the Security Council might be pushed into taking certain actions to ensure compliance with its resolutions. The draft resolution before the Council specifies possible measures that may be imposed against the Sudan in case of continued lack of compliance with prior resolutions. It definitely gives the Sudan ample time to implement the resolutions of the Council. It would be most unfortunate indeed if at the end of the 90-day grace period the Council were to find itself with no option but to impose the measures foreseen in the present draft resolution.

I wish to conclude by once again imploring the Government of Sudan to comply fully with the demands of resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996). We hope the Government of the Sudan will respond positively to the demands of those resolutions and that the draft resolution on which we are about to vote will be the last to be adopted by the Council on this question.

Mr. Lopes Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) (*interpretation from French*): Very soon — only hours — after the attempt to assassinate President Mubarak, Guinea-Bissau condemned that act of terrorism. We consider that any State offering passage, logistics or shelter to terrorists has explicitly established its own complicity and thus bears international responsibility.

As noted, my country has sponsored the draft resolution before the Council. It did so not out of automatic African solidarity but because of a position based on clear principles. The Government of Guinea-Bissau is opposed to terrorism and will spare no effort in attacking terrorism in all its forms. This does not mean that we are about to make a general statement on this matter, as we had an opportunity, when resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996) were adopted, to discuss the question at length and clearly to state our position.

However, as we are about to vote on this very important draft resolution, I wish to take advantage of this opportunity on behalf of my Government to reaffirm our firm determination to contribute to the struggle against international terrorism in all its forms. Today's draft resolution is not aimed at the people of Sudan. As its provisions indicate, it is intended to inform the Government of Sudan that it must take the decision to bring to justice the individuals implicated in this act of terrorism. In our view, it is important that the Khartoum Government comply with the draft resolution within 90 days so that we are not forced once again to cite it for lack of respect for or non-compliance with decisions of the Security Council, which would oblige us to take measures that could be injurious to the people of Sudan.

We hope that in the coming 90 days the Government of Sudan and the Security Council will be able to affirm that the provisions of the draft resolution have been observed and that we are in a position to bring to justice the individuals implicated in the attack.

The President: I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1996/664.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Botswana, Chile, Egypt, France, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Poland, Republic of Korea, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:

China, Russian Federation

The President: The result of the voting is as follows: 13 votes in favour, none against and 2 abstaining. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1070 (1996).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It is almost four months since the Security Council adopted resolution 1054 (1996), in which it reaffirmed its demand that the Sudanese Government comply with two clear, specific demands earlier set out in two resolutions of the Organization of African Unity, which had taken the view that this matter posed a threat to the security of the African continent.

The first demand was the extradition to Ethiopia of the three suspects sheltered in Sudan and wanted in connection with the criminal assassination attempt on the life of the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Addis Ababa. The second demand was that Sudan desist from supporting terrorist activities and from giving shelter to terrorist elements.

Since the adoption of that resolution in April, and despite the fact that it imposed limited diplomatic measures to compel Sudan to comply with the demands of the international community, we note that Sudan has persisted in its attempts to avoid complying with the Security Council's requests, as is clear from the July report of the Secretary-General.

We in Egypt had hoped that the Sudanese regime would fully understand the clear message of resolution 1054 (1996), namely, that the Council will never tolerate the conduct of any Government anywhere in support of

international terrorism or in providing on its territory any shelter or sanctuary for traitors who have sold out their countries, consciences and religion and who are determined to use terrorism as a means to their ends.

This hope was reinforced when President Hosni Mubarak met with his Sudanese counterpart, President Omer Al-Bashir, in Cairo at the Arab summit. At the time Egypt thought that Sudan had the political will expected of it by the international community. At that time Egypt accepted Sudan's request to open a channel of communications between the countries' security authorities to discuss the subjects that represent real problems in this respect.

Unfortunately, Egypt hopes were dashed when we realized that Sudan's aim was not to enter into a dialogue, but rather to try to take advantage of Egypt's assent to starting that dialogue to give the false impression to the international community that it was doing what was expected of it.

Egypt thinks that the resolution just adopted by the Council and sponsored by the African countries of the Council, resolution 1070 (1996), is a mere wake-up call addressed to Sudan. It says that Sudan must cooperate with the Council and with the concerned countries — especially Egypt and Ethiopia — in order to comply with the requests of the Council contained in previous resolutions and reaffirmed in today's resolution.

It is extremely difficult for Egypt to return to the Security Council because of Sudan's refusal to cooperate in the implementation of the resolutions of the Council. What the international community has announced is that it must combat international terrorism by all means. No one fully knows how deep and friendly are the relations that link the Egyptian people with the Sudanese people: their ties are as old as the Nile, are enhanced by geographical proximity, neighbourly relations, a common language, the similarity of their social customs and the human relations between the two peoples in the Nile valley since time immemorial. Moreover, we in Egypt consider that the common destiny of Egypt and Sudan is a fact. That is something we have felt since the dawn of history.

On this basis, I would like to repeat here very clearly what I said on behalf of my Government throughout the consultations: Egypt finds it unacceptable to be behind anything that affects the interests of the Sudanese people, adds to its economic suffering in its daily life or harms its territorial integrity.

On the other hand, our brothers in Sudan should understand that the resolutions of the Security Council should be respected and implemented. That is why we call on the Sudanese Government to take advantage of the grace period given it by the Council, until the middle of November 1996, to translate sweet talk into proper action. The old Arab verse that the representative of Sudan quoted, describes, as a matter of fact, the feelings of the Egyptian people, because the Egyptian people never expected the infiltration of terrorism from brotherly Sudan.

Egypt — whose people feel real bitterness — hopes that the coming period will witness positive developments from Sudan, in terms of the extradition of the suspects, the provision of any information Sudan has about them and the severance of all relations — I repeat, all relations — with terrorist organizations so that the interests of the brotherly people of Sudan will not suffer.

Allow me to conclude today, as I concluded my statement last April by saying that every Egyptian understands and feels the special nature of the age-old historical relations in the Nile valley that link the two peoples of Egypt and Sudan. We in Egypt consider our country a natural extension of Sudan and Sudan an extension of Egypt. Whatever touches the people of Sudan touches the people of Egypt, and vice versa. Egypt is very eager for the Sudanese Government to turn on to the right path so that the Sudanese people will enjoy prosperity and good relations with all their neighbours, especially with us in Egypt. We are confident that the deep-going ties that link our peoples in the north and south of the Nile valley, and which have been enhanced during the course of history, will, God willing, for ever continue to grow stronger, like the waters of the Nile, the life-line of Sudan and Egypt.

Mr. Ladsous (France) (*interpretation from French*): The Security Council has been considering the question of Sudan since the beginning of the year. It took up the question following serious events that endangered the life of the Egyptian President. It was following the attempted assassination of Mr. Mubarak that the Council requested, in resolution 1044 (1996) of 31 January 1996, that Sudan extradite the three suspects and renounce terrorism.

Thus far, Sudan has not fully satisfied these two basic points. The Council emphasized this once again when it adopted a second resolution on 26 April 1996, resolution 1054 (1996), to prevail upon the Sudanese authorities to meet their obligations.

We must say today that that second warning by the Council has not been completely heeded. It is true that the Khartoum Government has made some efforts to implement the two Council resolutions, but we believe that the efforts made to date are inadequate.

It therefore seems timely to us for the Council to step up its pressure on the Sudanese authorities so that they will fully discharge their obligations under resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996).

That is why the Council has just adopted a resolution containing a decision to impose air sanctions against Sudan. The text also provides that the date of entry into force of those sanctions, as well as the modalities of their implementation, will be the subject of discussions to take place within 90 days.

The Government of France intends to see to it that these new sanctions are understood not as a punishment but as an incentive. That is why the Council must think about how they should be applied, and in particular about their duration. In our view, these measures should not penalize the people of Sudan by making them suffer additional restrictions that could have serious humanitarian consequences.

In any event, these measures will not enter into force yet. And we hope that the Sudanese authorities will take advantage of the three-month period granted them to bring themselves into compliance with resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996).

The sanctions against Sudan are not inevitable. It is up to the Government of Sudan to demonstrate that they may, indeed, be avoided.

Mr. Matuszewski (Poland): The Polish delegation stated its position on the issue before us on 31 January 1996 and on 26 April 1996.

My country condemns terrorism in all its forms. Having examined very carefully the report of the Secretary-General of 10 July 1996, as well as other relevant documents, we have to concur with the conclusion that the Government of Sudan has failed to comply with the demands contained in resolutions 1044 (1996) and 1054 (1996).

We therefore urge that Government to take immediate and effective steps to fulfil its obligations, including measures which would ensure that the persons suspected of committing an attempt on the life of President Mubarak of Egypt are brought to justice, as stipulated in this Council's resolutions and in the documents of the Organization of African Unity.

The resolution the Security Council has just adopted confirms that the international community expects the Government of Sudan to fully comply with the demands of this Council and of the Organization of African Unity. It is also evidence of this Council's determination in pursuing all possible options to influence the behaviour of those who endanger international peace and security by supporting terrorism. By postponing the decision on the actual entry into force of sanctions, the resolution provides the Government of Sudan with a chance to take the necessary action. We sincerely hope that this chance is not to be lost.

With this in mind, the Polish delegation voted in favour of the resolution.

Mr. Espinosa (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): With its vote in favour, my delegation contributed to the adoption of the resolution introduced by three African States that are members of the Security Council. From the beginning, we expressed our alarm at and condemnation of the treacherous assassination attempt against President Mubarak of Egypt. With this resolution, the Council sends a clear signal that Sudan must respond to the requests contained in paragraph 4 of resolution 1044 (1996) and reaffirmed in resolution 1054 (1996). Like France, we view these provisions as incentives and not as punishment. We believe the resolution provides a reasonable grace period for the adoption of the measures necessary to meet the requirements of the Council in this matter.

This is not a resolution of immediate effect. In due course, when the time limit provided for in operative paragraph 4 has elapsed, we will have an opportunity to properly assess the situation and its developments. We express our hope that this assessment will make it unnecessary for us to take further measures. To this end, we will be paying attention to everything that occurs, to all information the Secretary-General can provide us and to information from any other relevant source. And if, regrettably, it turns out that measures have to be adopted, we will see to it that in their application account is taken of their possible humanitarian implications *inter alia*. Should sanctions have to be implemented, we are interested in ensuring that they do not bring harm to the Sudanese people. In the view of my country, to the extent

possible we must avoid creating innocent victims in the fight against terrorism.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Germany.

The subject we are talking about today is terrorism. Once again we are dealing with the very serious matter of the attempted assassination of the President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, on 26 June of last year.

My Government's position on terrorism has been pointed out clearly: we will not give in to terrorism; we have to fight it. Those who have committed terrorist acts have to be brought to justice. Those who have supported terrorists have to bear the consequences.

On several occasions the Council has discussed this matter and urged the Government of Sudan to comply with the requests of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Twice the Security Council has adopted resolutions asking for the extradition of the suspects and calling upon the Sudanese Government to desist from any kind of support for terrorist activities.

The decision on further sanctions is not an easy one. As we stated earlier, the purpose of sanctions should not be punishment. The sanctions are aiming at those who are in a position to take the required measures. The sanctions should not bring unnecessary suffering to the civilian population.

Sudan is given another 90 days to comply with these resolutions. Now it is up to Sudan to show that its words are followed by deeds. We call upon the Sudanese Government to give clear evidence of its cooperation and to do its utmost to bring about the extradition of the suspects and to provide the international community with all the information necessary so that the suspects can be prosecuted in Ethiopia.

On the basis of these considerations, Germany voted in favour of the adoption of this resolution.

There are no further speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.